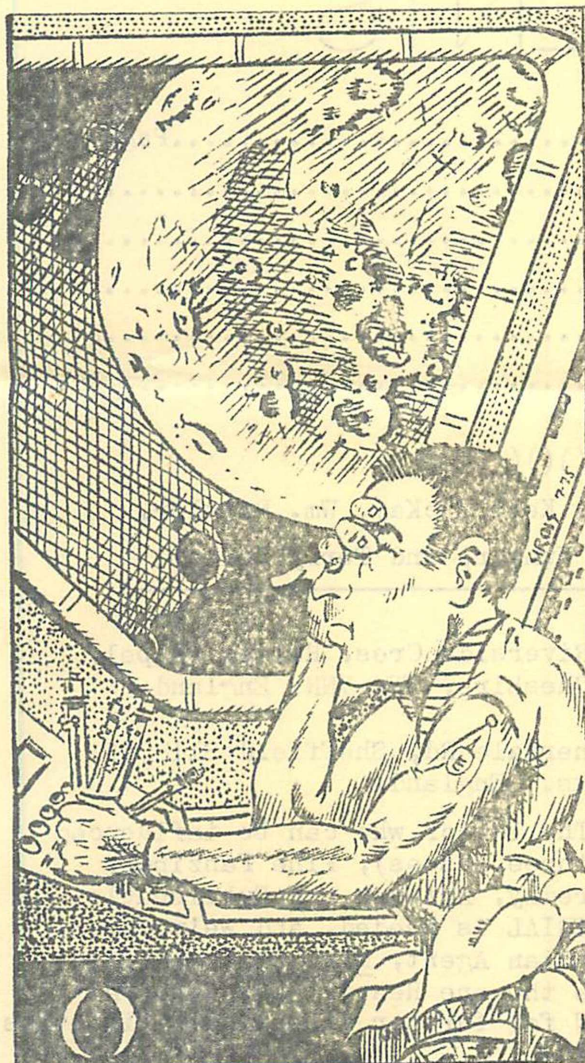


# TRIODE

22.

WINTER 1975

QUARTERLY



BILL BOWERS  
FOR  
T.A.F.F.



Jeeves '75



<u>HAIR OF THE GREEP</u>	By Eric Bentscliffe.....	Page 3.
<u>OVERLORD OF THE FLIES</u>	By 'Hal Roach'.....	12.
<u>NEW WHORLS</u>	By John Berry.....	19.
<u>THE FAN ARTIST WRITES</u>	By Alan Hunter.....	23.
<u>FANSARD</u>	Letters and eb.....	27.
<u>INTERLUDE</u>	By Terry Jeeves.....	39.

COVER: AL SIROIS. INTERIOR ILLOS: Barry Kent MacKay, Wm. Rotsler,  
&  
TERRY JEEVES Alan Hunter, and Terry Jeeves.

produced by TERRY JEEVES 230 Bannerdale Rd, Sheffield S11 9FE,  
Yorks. England.

And is available at the whim of The Editor who can be influenced by receiving money ( £1.00 or \$2.50 for three issues), Fine Fanzines, Goodly letters-of-comment and, most assuredly, Artwork and Publishable Material. Yeah, verily, PUBLISHABLE MATERIAL is needed, and we've even taken the step of of authorising our Canadian Agent, Mike Glicksohn, to buy people drinks to get some....he'll be the one Heavily Disguised at the next Convention you attend... READ ON for further diabolical iniquities.

"Graham Hall plans to supplement his earnings as a comic-strip writer by teaching English to the Iranian Air Force. As his special line in the comics is stories of WWI fliers, expect some mind-boggling developments in the Middle East soon..." Jim Cawthorn.



#### THE HOAX THAT BIT BACK.

Several fen have been curious enough to enquire just what caused the re-birth of TRIODE; some of the older enquiree's even have asked me where they can get hold of the fannish elixer - the SUPER BLOG - which they assumed did the trick for me. I answered them, but I didn't tell them the whole hairy truth. Probably my engrams wouldn't let me - you remember 'engrams's, of course, they were what Ron Hubbard had before he got Scientology - my engrams dating back to the fifties are matured and powerful ones. However, I've overcome them, it hasn't been easy, but I feel that I should tell all as a warning, if nothing else, to any other old-and-gafiated-fans who TRIODE may have inspired to start thinking about reviving their fanzine.

It was going to be a hoax, folks. I got the idea whilst waiting for someone ( anyone! ) to print BLAZON ONE. It was a few months before that grand Science Fiction Festival and Debauchery organised by those Newcastle Gnomes....and I had this fabulous fannish idea.(I tried to suppress it, naturally...but it was a good one, and I succumbed.) I'd secretly, with the help only of a pile of ancient mss. and rotting stencils and Terry Jeeves get TRIODE 19 out. I'd go to the convention, and I'd wait until Ted Tubb was in full spate during the fanzine auction, and slip a copy - a suitably soiled, eye-tracked copy - in amongst the moldering BEH's and HYPHEN's and PLOY's. After this had been sold for some phenomenal sum....I'd start to peddle the Other Copies!

But I didn't get to the Newcastle Convention, and Triode 19 was not quite ready anyway...which is about par for most of the fabulous fannish ideas I get. However, shortly afterwards I started to mail the zine out and the response was quite considerable. Numerous fen, recovering quickly from the traumatic shock of receiving a 7th Fandom fanzine today, wrote insultingly encouraging letters. You can see the trap I was falling into, I presume ?



I was enjoying getting egoboo again, and having fnz thud through a previously undesecrated letter-box was re-awakening all sorts of dormant instincts; the local postman was a friendly one - so far - and I'd now re-established links with old friends in fandom, and made new ones as well. Perhaps one more issue.....or two. It would be interesting to see if I could re-create the atmosphere that used to permeate fanzines back in the fifties. Yer...I was hooked again!

And darn it, so far I'm enjoying the addiction. TRIODE's 19, 20, and 21 were fairly deliberate re-creations of a style of fanzine that was in vogue quite some time ago. A style which certain of the newer British fen apparently find outmoded - however, it also happens to be the style I find most suitable to create the ambience I'm aiming at. Naturally, I've changed since those earlier days, become more sere, possibly more mature, but fanzines are still things to have fun with and I doubt that future issues will show any radical departure from that-which-has-gone-before. I could put out an s-f orientated fanzine, but I said what I want to say about science-fiction quite some years ago, and whilst I'll no doubt make comment on any interesting ( to me ) new trend, or idea, in passing, the current s-f scene doesn't inspire me to devote a whole magazine or even a large part thereof to that subject. I could follow the current U.K. fnz trend and put out a combined comment-and-letter-zine, but I'm not inspired to do that either; partly because the proliferation of such magazines turns that segment of fandom it inhabits into a sort of super-apa, with comments-on-comments-on-comments and little else. And, also, because I was around when Bob Peatrowsky was putting out CONFAB and Vern McCain REVIEW and Redd Boggs DISCORD, all really excellent examples of this type of publishing, and it would, due to the deterioration in the postal services, now be impossible to capture the immediacy that was the essence of their success. On an International basis, anyway, and that's how I prefer to operate.

It's more than likely then that Triode will continue to be a mordantly-brilliant (pat.pending) slightly-different-to-the-current-norm-genzine. And anyone who doesn't like their eggs done that way, can make their own arrangements.

So let's talk about Romania.....

Bentcliffe was here

WHERE NO BERRY HAS BEEN BEFORE

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Most fans are interested in travel, and since neither of the globe-trotting John Berry's has yet been seen in Eastern-Europe - that part of Eastern Europe behind the Iron Curtain, anyway - I may score a Fannish First.

If you want to know why the Bentcliffe family decided to invade the Balkans, well, you may if you wish put it down to curiosity, or even to a subliminal urge that since every other horde has done it, why don't we! But the fact that it was a relatively cheap place to go to also has some bearing on the fact.



Romania came first in '73; over the years we'd sampled the varied and various vacation spots of Italy, Spain, Switzerland, Austria and the Balearic's, we'd enjoyed them but we felt like a change of scene. Also, many of the British tour-operators were in financial dilemma, and as the Romanian ( and Bulgarian ) organisations were backed by their respective governments there was less likelihood of there going bankrupt on the eve of our departure. The Black Sea resorts seemed to offer the right criteria for the kind of vacation we like...Lindsey was ten at the time and previous experience had proved that if we chose a spot where sun, sea, and sand were plentiful, then we could relax, too.

Mamia was the name of the resort finally chosen, it met the above mentioned essentials, plus one or two personal criteria of my own - it was close enough to a big city ( Constanta ) to provide me with interesting walkabouts when I tired of soaking up the sun and exhibiting my rather primitive frog-type crawl. An added bonus was that the exchange-rate was a good one; the Eastern bloc had decided, apparently, that they needed more western currency and were offering well above the normal Leva to the Pound rate to get it.

Our Boeing 727 left Manchester Airport on a wet, dark, September night, and arrived in Constanta on a wet, dark, September morning; but we weren't worried, this was standard-operational-practice for a Bent-cliffe holiday and come the dawn, the sun would blaze down on a vista of blue sea and golden sand. The only time this hadn't come about was in Spain one year when our damp arrival heralded a typhoon, but that's another story! This time Harrison was kind to us, and when we woke at a more reasonable hour of the morning, the sun was shining on a blue Black Sea.

Mamia, whilst not comparable with Nice and Cannes, is a pleasantly sited resort on a six-mile strip of land between the sea and Lake Suitghol, and whilst it does not have the gloss of the former resorts it does have the advantage over western sun-spots that land-values being 'nil', the hotels are not crowded together like concrete sentinels; there are only around fifty along the whole strip. This makes for a pleasantly uncrowded aspect. Virtually a suburb of Constanta, it has been a resort for many years catering in turn for Romans, Greeks, Byzantine Turks, and possibly Visigoth's as well. The former Romanian Summer-Palace ( now a casino...) is right at the centre of things, and another minor historical note is struck by the islet of Ovidiu on Lake Suitghol. This was named for the poet Ovid, who chose to decline there. However, it is only in recent years that the Romanian government has promoted it into an international resort by spending a lot of money on new hotels, and by giving it a new name. Mamia, is a deliberate anagram of Miami! Who say's that Communism can't learn from the West...

Our Hotel was typical of most in the resort - not particularly aesthetically pleasing to look at and slightly sleazy when compared with most of those found in Western resorts; but making up for this by having an interesting amalgam of guests from both East and West Europe and the middle-east. We did miss (?) the coachloads of middle aged matrons from michigan, but I gather it isn't easy for them to get a visa for Communist countries? However, enough of the travel-chat, let's talk about the country and its people.

Other things being reasonably equal its the people you meet on holyday that make that holiday either memorable or not, for me anyway, and this one was made memorable by one Roamnian family in particular, and quite a number of their friends. Initially, we found the Romanians ( no doubt as a result of Governmental attitudes) slightly wary of contact. However, on our second day Lindsey fell flat on a Romanian sand-castle and a beachhead was established....Corneliu and Teresheka, with their daughter Lydia were on vacation from a seaport up near the Russian border called Galati. They had a little English, and with my smattering of Italian/Spanish latin and the whole wide beach to draw on, we gradually came to converse quite freely. Corneliu was a shipping-engineer, and Teresheka a biology-teacher, and from them I think we probably learned more about the country than would otherwise have been possible. And once we were seen to be 'friendly', other Romanians on vacation started to talk to us - English is now taught in all the state schools, together with Russian, French and the native tongue - and the language and political differences were no longer a barrier.

Romania is probably, after Yugoslavia, the most liberal ( in the true sense of that word ) of the communist european countries. The Russian 'presence' was withdrawn in 1970 and there are now three official political parties; I'm not going to attempt to translate their titles, but they can be termed Communist, left-wing Liberal, and left-wing Conservative ( again, in the dictionary sense of the word). The former party, of course, holds the balance of power, but doesn't appear to use it overtly. However, I'm not going to get involved in dialectic argument here; I can't read Rumanian and I'm reporting hearsay, and general impressions. Anyway, I'd rather try to give some indication of what life is actually like in the country in comparison to that in the U.K.

It isn't easy to relate the two. The Rumanian economy is basically an agrarian one ( not an industrial ) and a very high proportion of the populace are what can only be described as peasants - they have a small house and a small piece of land on which they grow, or graze, most of their needs, and their interests do not go far beyond their land. These are people who have always been peasants, and they would live in this manner irrespective of regime or political system unless actually forced away from it, as their ancestors have done for numerous generations. There's has been a society of what Mack Reynolds would term 'lowers' and 'uppers'; this is now changing in that there is an emergent middle-class of scientists, teachers, managers, and what I can only describe, innacurately, as 'civil-servants'. There's is a more westernised life, and one to which we can more easily relate. They don't have the personal freedom that we in the West enjoy, they don't 'earn' as much as they would in the West - in real terms, that is, relating what one can buy with what one got from working, we came to the conclusion that it took the average Rumanian three times as many working hours to buy an equivalent item... ..if he could find it in the shops. Also, it is extremely difficult for them to travel outside their own country. A passport is not a right of citizenship, but a difficultly-obtained privilege; particularly where travel ( or emigration ) outside the Eastern Bloc is involved. For instance, our friends from Galati would like to emigrate to Canada where they have relatives, they have been trying to get passports for some t. four years without success, partly because Corneliu in his work at the shipyards has access to 'classified' material.



He was trying to become a full-time lecturer at Galati University (where he was teaching part-time) in an attempt to solve this problem. However, even when a passport is obtained there are other difficulties; Romanian currency may not be taken out of the country, and it is not possible for an ordinary citizen to legally acquire western currency. The only places in Romania in which tourists from the west may legally spend other than Romanian Lei are Government operated "Dollar Shops". There is, naturally, a Black Market in which the tourist can obtain very high rates of exchange, providing, that is, he doesn't mind risking a somewhat longer vacation in the local Lubianka. (Whilst we were there, one tourist got himself arrested for photographing some of Romania's rather medieval railway engines - I can only presume that they don't want the West to know that they have discovered Steam!) If one can acquire both a passport and enough of the right currency there is still a problem in that many western countries will not accept them as immigrants. Corneliu, and many of his friends, so he said, would like to go to either America or Canada, but they can't go directly there. There exists, apparently, a fairly large expatriate colony in Italy, and the usual route is to go there first, establish Italian citizenship and then seek the 'New World'.

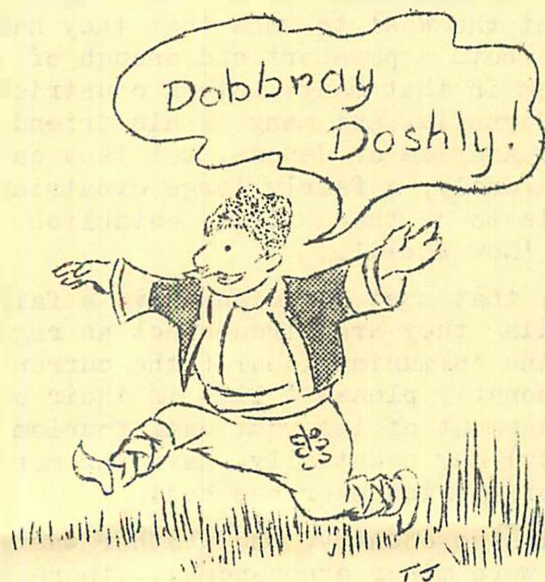
It is only fair to say, however, that most Rumanians have a fair amount of personal freedom; and providing they are circumspect as regards expressing ideas contrary to that of the communist ideal (the current communist ideal), they can lead a reasonably pleasant life in their own country. I suspect that their encouragement of international tourism (and the showing of Western programmes on tv) may eventually, have far more effect in this regard than the Voice of America ever has had!

We thoroughly enjoyed our stay in the country, the weather was great and the surroundings pleasant. There were minor annoyances....there most always are...a lack of the small friendly bars so common in Italy and Spain, for instance, but we made our own entertainment with the people we met and enjoyed the differences. And there were some amusing moments, such as when Beryl (never one to give up easily) persisted in an attempt to get a non-English speaking waiter to explain when he had a day off.... and was rewarded with a cup of tea...

And the time when I helped a couple of damsels in distress. As I sat sipping Tsuica one evening after dinner, Helen, one of two Welsh girls we had got to know dashed up in a state of panic. She and friend Dorothy had just been invited to the resorts premier night-spot, The Melody Bar, by a couple of Yugoslavian boys, but they couldn't get into their room to change - someone (quite possibly the Turks they'd been out with the previous evening) had stuffed the lock with matchsticks. I'd mentioned that I managed a Hardware Store and they presumed this qualified me as a lock expert....anyway, I was all they'd got. The hotel manager couldn't help, the State didn't allow him to have duplicate keys, and the nearest burglar he knew of was twenty miles away and could easily be otherwise engaged at this hour of the night, anyway. By the time I got to the scene of the crime it was rather crowded; there were the two Yugoslav hopeful's, Dorothy, several members of the pop-group who played in the hotel in search of an audience, a couple of maids who wanted to turn the beds down, a waiter (just waiting); and I'd brought along Corneliu with me - I wasn't sure how good I'd be at picking a Rumanian lock and his broad shoulders might come in useful.

7

The whole affair had almost the air of a good convention corridor party since one of the Yugoslav's was passing around a bottle of Cognac, however, pausing only to help lower the level of the bottle...I attacked the lock with a warped hair-pin and cries of Prima! (This is a general purpose Romanian word useful in almost any contingency.) It wasn't too difficult a task actually, I got most of the splinters out with the hairpin, burnt out the rest by pouring brandy into the lock ( at which point the vocal encouragement I had been getting faltered, momentarily) and lighting it, and Corneliu's wide shoulders did the rest. To a chorus of Rule Britannia, I returned triumphant to the bar.



I also got a lot of interest out of exploring Constanta during a couple of side trips. Beryl and Lindsey were happy on the beach and I took one of the frequent trolley-buses between Mamaia and the city. (There are few private cars in the country, but public transport is frequent and cheap - in the towns and cities, anyway.) Passing, on the outskirts numerous blocks of stark modern workers-flats - Concrete Confidence Tricks, the workers are allowed to 'buy' them under a state mortgage scheme, but are not allowed to sell, or to leave them to their children. They revert to the state after the buyers death!

As a settlement, Constanta goes back to at least the 6th. century B.C. when it was known as Tomis, and the present day city is replete with pleasant parks where the results of various archeological digs are displayed. Roman Mosaics, Greek Gourds and statuary, Phoenician brick and, possibly even, Atlantean remains. These do clash a little with a huge group of statuary depicting the 'Romanian Worker' of more recent times, but I gained considerable pleasure in wandering around with my camera both in the parks and the older part of the city. And I was amused at their being a huge sign near the port area banning all photography, for if one went up the nearby mosque ( as I did) one could get much better photo's of the naval ships therein. In retrospect, this seems rather indicative of life in Romania today....you can do almost anything you like, as long as you don't do it there.

#### MEANWHILE ON THE IVORY COAST.

There aren't, I suspect, many Hardware Stores which can claim the dubious distinction of existing on an Elephants Grave Yard...at least, not in England. No doubt in the wilds of Darkest Africa they are quite common, but not in rural England, I'm sure. However, the store I run does have this distinction; our Jumbo-size-packs really are! It all came about sometime around the turn of the century, indeed, it may even have been responsible for it. Back then all deliveries from the store were made by horse and cart,



and a quite deep pit existed at the rear of the store for the disposition of horse manure. It never got full to overflowing as local ultra-keen gardeners used to raid it at night. And then, one summers day, along came the annual travelling circus and set up their tents in the field behind the Lamb Hotel ( which shared our rear frontage!) which would have been all fine and normal for the time of year, but someone forgot to tether the Elephant whose unwise walkabout led him to the edge of the pit, and beyond. He fell, I'm told, with a resounding squelch, and the residue from his descent completely covered two interested spectators.

Since the pit was deep and the elephant relatively small, and the circus did not possess a herculean strong-man, there it stayed! It had to be shot, limed, and the now somewhat smaller pit filled in. Since those days the store has got larger, and that area is now well concreted over. However, when the annual circus ( they still haven't bought another elephant; or if they have they aren't bringing it near Nantwich...) comes to town: 'so T'is said' The ghost of dumbo goes abroad, a weird muted trumpeting can be heard, and the local inhabitants lie uneasy in their beds.

And I wonder, just what some future archeologist will make of the discovery of an elephantine skeleton beneath the undulant Cheshire plain...

#### BULGARIAN BAEDEKER.

Having enjoyed our '73 vacation, we returned to the area in the following year - a little further south to the neighbouring country of Bulgaria, and the resort of Zlatni Pyassutsi. Only a few years ago it was a wasteland, now its Zlatni Pyassutsi. A wasteland infested by snakes, so the Bulgars brought in loads of hedgehogs to clear them out and not being a wasteful people now serve the hedgehogs to tourists at 'gipsy encampments'!

Again, it was the people we met who made the holiday a memorable one, but this time they were principally from the West, and the middle-east. Bulgaria is a more hard-line communist state and does not encourage its nationals to vacation in areas which are literally enclaves for foreign tourists. Pleasant enclaves, I'll stress, but I like to spend some of my time abroad finding out what a country is really like. In Bulgaria this was difficult. There were Bulgarian newspapers printed in English, but I couldn't stomach the dialectic or the double-talk.

Together with Bill (another nose character) I did spend a day wandering around Varna, a large city/seaport some twenty miles from the resort.



Jeeves

It was interesting, but rather depressing. And, to be honest, somewhat frightening in that there was a strong military presence and an inescapable aura of Big-Brother....perhaps enhanced by the very futuristic lamp-posts reminiscent of the Martian fighting-machines of the film version of WAR OF THE WORLDS; these streamlined clusters on high, slim posts gave the impression that someone was watching you all the time.

We did get some entertainment from the Most Confusing Cafeteria I've ever encountered - upon arrival in Bulgaria you are given ( as part of your package-deal) a form of currency voucher which can be used for food and drink at any of the restaurants in the resort area's, this is a convenient system in that you can eat anywhere you like rather than having to have all your meals in one hotel. It also serves the purpose of keeping currency other than Bulgarian out of circulation. However, in Varna we were off the tourist route and hungry, and we had acquired some local currency, so we went into this fairly smart cafeteria sauntered up to the counter and attempted to obtain coffee, toasted sandwiches, and some interesting looking Gâteau. It wasn't that easy...we had noted cash desks near the doors as we entered and presumed one paid. there after eating. A reasonable assumption that turned out to be completely and utterly wrong! We were in an alien society. To obtain our modest repast it was necessary to go to three separate cash-desks and purchase separate tickets for each item we required, then we could join a queue for comestibles. Whilst this presumably created extra jobs for the Bulgarians it also created a tremendous amount of confusion, for having obtained the tickets you then had to obtain the food and drink from three separate counters, meanwhile attempting to capture seats at crowded tables. This incident made me realise how facile are so many of the alien societies depicted in science-fiction - if a race as close to us in mentality as the Bulgars can come up with a system like this; what could a really alien cafeteria be like. I just hope that when the first men go out on the first star-ship they take plenty of sandwiches!

This make-work was encountered in several different ways whilst we were in Bulgaria, it is nice to have full employment, but somewhat soul-destroying when done in this manner. For instance, stationed at every bus-stop between Zlatni Pyassutsi and Varna ( a distance of twenty miles) were girls in sailor uniform, their purpose to sell bus-tickets. There was a conductor on each bus but his, or her job was merely to check that you had a ticket. And one day we went for a cruise on the Black Sea; a cruise without any ports of call. When boarding the vessel you were handed a boarding-card at the bottom of the gangway - at the top of the gangway ( thirty feet away) it was collected from you. And there were various trench-coated supervisors stood around to make sure this was done properly. This happened again on our return to port and I can only assume it as being a check on anyone who had committed suicide rather than return to Varna...

Much amusement was provided on the cruise by a bunch of Swedish travel-couriers who wore bright yellow t-shirts embellished with the initials of their company - SPIES. I chatted with one of these characters and he told me that whilst initially they had trouble with immigration, once they showed their company idents, and stressed that they were official SPIES they got red (!) carpet treatment....and I can almost believe it, too.



And talking of food, as I was a couple of paragraphs back, I must for the benefit of PIGS and other bon viveurs tell of THE GREAT FLAMING MISTEAK. This happening took place in one of Zlatni Pyassutsi's best restaurants, where the food was excellent and the service normally very good. We were sat, replete, awaiting our sweet-course when a youngish waiter dashed with burdened tray to the table next to ours. He laid succulent steak surrounded by french fries and veg' before a waiting couple; produced a bottle of cognac with great panache, poured this over the furshlugginer lot and lit it....I'm almost too embarrassed to relate the punch-line; he then discovered he was at the wrong table!

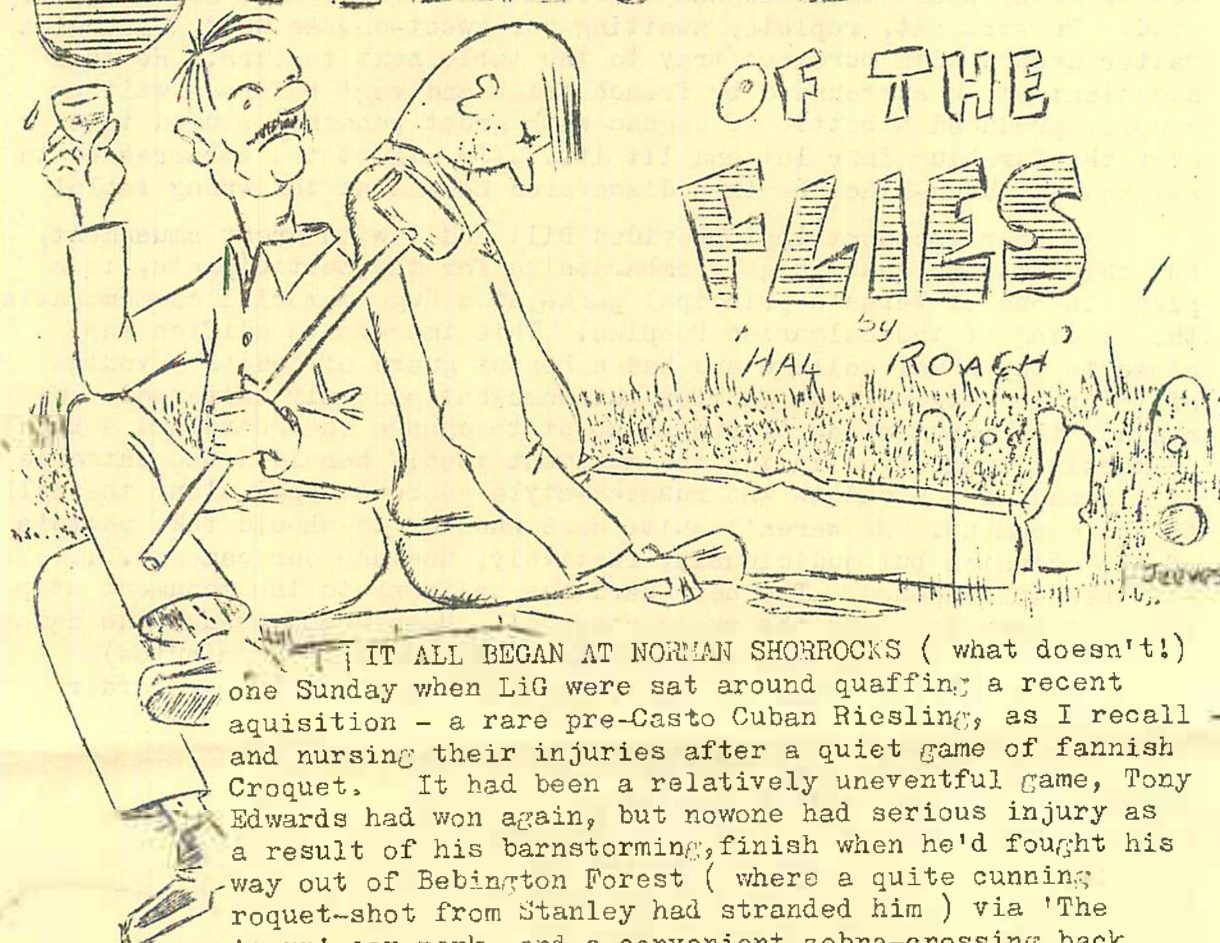
Another incident that provided Bill and I with great amusement, but which was no doubt highly embarrassing for the participants, took place in one of Varna's principal parks at a huge memorial commemorating the Freeing of the Bulgarian Peoples. This impressive edifice was close to the naval college and had a honour guard of cadets - youths of 15 or 16 very serious in mien but somewhat slovenly uniformed. We reached the monument as they were about to change the guard, and a blast of martial music from inside the monument itself heralded the entrance of a squad of ten cadets who russian-style goose-stepped along the mall to the monument. We weren't quite sure whether we should take photo's of the occasion but judiciously, furtively, unslung our cameras..... and then it happened. The new guard was half way to the monument stepping out bravely - and the music stopped! Nonplussed though the cadets were, they had the aplomb to mark-time ( for nearly ten minutes) whilst some secret-master inside the monument got the tape-recorder working again.

The Bulgarians are, from my brief experience, a completely different people to the neighbouring Rumanians even though they share a common history. Whilst the Rumanians, in general, have a latin outlook on life ( a modified latin look on life), the Bulgars take things much more seriously whether it be dogma or just 'living'. It was extremely rare to see a smile on a Bulgarian face (despite their obvious predilection for pratfalls!), and several young British communists we met ( there under the auspices of the Young Communists League or some such) did appear to be modifying earlier vehement statements on the need for Britain to become a 'truly socialist state' towards the end of the holiday. Possibly also relevant to this volte face being their discovery that they were paying £30.00 more than us for the same accomodation....

We enjoyed the Balkans, but I don't think we'd want our daughter to marry one.....



## OVERLORD

OF THE  
FLIESby  
'HAL ROACH'

IT ALL BEGAN AT NORMAN SHORROCKS ( what doesn't!) one Sunday when LiG were sat around quaffing a recent aquisition - a rare pre-Casto Cuban Riesling, as I recall - and nursing their injuries after a quiet game of fannish Croquet. It had been a relatively uneventful game, Tony Edwards had won again, but nowone had serious injury as a result of his barnstorming, finish when he'd fought his way out of Bebington Forest ( where a quite cunning roquet-shot from Stanley had stranded him ) via 'The Acorn' car-park, and a convenient zebra-crossing back to the Lawn at Arnot Way to peg out. The gang were relaxed, only Norman himself appeared perturbed.

" Look, Norman," said Tony, " I'm sorry my spiked running shoes punctured your spot-ball, but all's fair in love and croquet.....like when you filled all the balls with brandy and came in twenty strokes ahead of everyone. Though how you of all people managed...."

"It's not that, Tony," replied Norman, " I don't mind losing occasionally, even on my home-lawn. Its the apples! Ina is having to actually add alcohol to the apple-crumble-flambe Somethings wrong! Wrong, I tell you, wrong."

" There's a lot of snub-rot about this year, Norman," I offered, I know of one chap who had it in his gooseberries. Or, it could be fleagle-beetle..?"

" Don't think so, Eric, the alcohol in the sap has always kept bugs and fungus at bay in previous years. I mean, I tested the proofage only last autumn and it compared more than favourably with previous years; the apples were up to 40%, and the sap itself was over 20% on The Harrison Scale."



And he was right on this, I'd never seen a healthier apple-tree than Norman's. For years he'd been putting all his wine-mulch around the roots, and apart from drunken butterflies littering the lawn, and benign bumble-bees staggering through his air-space there was little evidence of any infestation. Indeed, the usual lepidopterous inhabitants of the garden seemed aware of what Norman was doing for them, and happily went about their business, fighting off any harmful invaders before they could even get into the garden. But, obviously, something was wrong now.

" Could there have been an unfavourable mutation of the common Fruit Fly, Norman ?" I queried. " You recall that you told me your next-door neighbour was taking an open university biology course, and he was irradiating them with Radio One programmes. Perhaps that's had some effect.... I mean, I know what effect it has on Lindsey, Ghu only knows what it does to insects!!"

Then John Roles mentioned that he'd just been sent one of Dr. Asimov's Minituarisation Kits, and it struck everyone almost simultaneously that if they didn't leave immediately, they were going to be featured in yet another Triode Saga. However, fortunately for you dear reader, several bottles were as yet unsampled, and their discretion was not as great as their thirst.

\* \* \* \* \*

" We'll have to plan this carefully," said Norman, " get together supplies, weapons - our previous experience in Toxophily will help here, I think....yes, bows and arrows for everyone; and we'd better take only fully mature wines. I don't think this stuff we're drinking now would travel well."

" It'll solve one problem, Norman," said Ina, "where to go for the gang-holiday. Everyone is getting a little tired of Majorca, and Ibiza. I'll write to Keith and Wendy, and see if Phil and Doreen want to come as well. What about Harrison, John, do you think He'd like to join us ?"

" Doubt it," replied JohnO, " apart from the fact that he wasn't too pleased about us writing Him off in TRIODE 19, he wouldn't agree to be shrunk. He's against anything that would Diminish His stature in the eyes of fandom. And, anyway, he's trying to sort out a little problem in Uganda to provide us with copy for a come-back....having trouble with the burnt-cork we sent him, too, I gather. It won't come off, and Idi's gone and picked him as his next ambassador to China."

" Right then, folks," cried Norman, " I'll fix a date, find out who's coming, and get everything together. Remember, Think Small!! "

With a chorus of groans, muted because he'd provided an excellent repast ( even if the apples were off, the zabaglione had been superb), we tried momentarily to divert him from The Plan, but with little avail.

\* \* \* \* \*

Three weeks later I received a letter from Norman. This alone was proof of how seriously he viewed the matter; the last time I had a letter from him was 1954! Postcards, wine-stained, from exotic places, yes; letters, no.

This one was, however, typically short and to the point:-

" Dear Eric,

Operation Apple-core starts Sunday. Have all equipment to hand. Bring own glass. Pre-aperitifs at Three.

.....Norman. "

And he wasn't kidding about the equipment, as I was to discover soon after arriving at Higher Bebington. " Right, Eric," he said, " whilst we are waiting for John Roles to arrive with the Asimov Kit, I'll show you what I've assembled. Come on out to the garage."

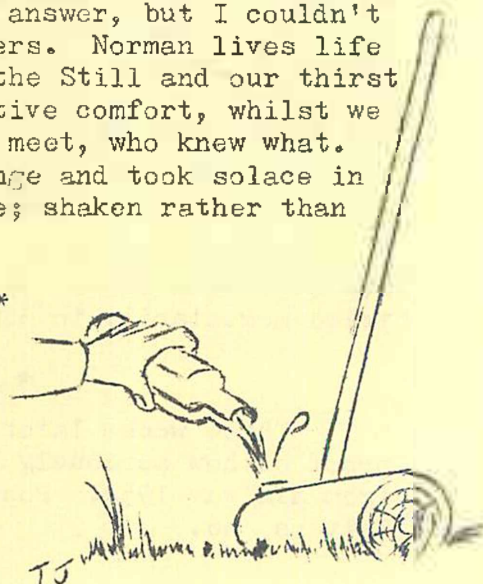
Reluctantly, I put down my glass and followed him out of the side-door. And into the garage....well, almost into the garage. It now became obvious to me why the others of the group gathered for the expedition had seemed so quiet and subdued. " Look, Norman", I said, " surely we aren't taking all this lot with us....allright, we'll need the bows and arrows for protection, and I suppose the Croquet Set will also be useful if we are attacked; the way Stan and Tony wield their mallets frightens me let alone poor unsuspecting arthropods....and five bottles each should be enough for starters; but you can't be serious about bringing your Still along as well....surely ? Even if John's right about Asimov's Things being capable of reducing anything, we aren't going to be very mobile if we have to cart that along."

" Ah, but you don't realise, Eric, why I'm taking the Still. You weren't here when I told the others of my plan. You'll recall though, that last years Dandelioncraap wasn't sufficient for our needs ? Well, I've worked it all out. We and the Still will be reduced, right ? But the Dandelions won't, right ? I'll be able to make gallons of wine from just one Dandelion....look, when we are reduced, I'll set up a base camp with the Still while you and the others go and hunt the bug that's doing the damage; that way we can't lose! Even if you fail to find whatever's getting at the apple-tree the expedition won't be a waste of time."

Like the others before me, I was struck dumb by the sheer brilliance and low-cunning of Norman's plan. There must be an answer, but I couldn't think of one, and neither (I suspect) could the others. Norman lives life like he plays Brag, with an ace up his sleeve, and the Still and our thirst was his ace....he would stay with his Still in relative comfort, whilst we brave gullible fools trod forth into the unknown to meet, who knew what. Resigned to my fate, I returned to the Shorrocks lounge and took solace in a glass of Lennon's African Sauterne-type white wine; shaken rather than stirred by Norman's plan.

\* \* \* \* \*

A few minutes later John Roles arrived. No, that's wrong.... Suddenly, there was an almighty crash from without, followed by a fusillade as of General Franco's Birthday Salute reproduced quadrophonically. John Roles and appurtenances had arrived! I thought Norman had gone too far with his equipment, but John had turned up laden to the moustache. And that of several scouse-dockers he -



TJ



had enlisted as native-bearers; strong, hirsute types, with an odour of fish and the pier-'ed about them. " Sorry to be late, everybody," said John, " but I have to preserve my image, and, anyway, I had to get one or two small items Asimov hadn't included in his kit."

There was a silence from the congregation equivalent in intensity to the previous uproar....

Then Stanley quietly voiced the thoughts of us all. " Er, John, what are all the books for ? We shan't have much time for reading, you know, we shall be too busy defending life and limb and bottle from huge, horrible insects and snails, and worms, and cockroachi, and.....ahhhhh! "

" A good question, Stanley," said Tony calmly, from where he now sat, on Stanley's head," but not well put, I fear. " What do you intend to do with them all, John ?"

" Well, they are all essential manuals on survival in untravelled parts. I've got Hughes 'Through The Gobi By Camel', ' How Hannibal Trained His Elephants', by Flynn, ' How To Survive In Central Park' by Dave Kyle, and... look, I've even managed to get hold of a first edition of Scott's 'To The Antarctic', that's very rare y' know, picked it up in a little side-street shop off the Ramblas in Barcelona, and....."

" John, JOHN!" shouted Norman, equably. " I'm sure they are all quite excellent books, but they won't be much use where we are going. I mean, there's no snow in the garden, and I don't think we'll come across any minituarised camels or elephants, or even Yippies. Bee's, yes, and carrot-fly, and cabbage-leaf miner, and the odd wriggly-wiggly friendly worm.... ANHHHHC!! GET OFF, Marge! "

" Well, nobody told me....you just said come prepared for anything," said John from between petulant lips, " anyway, I've brought the minituarisation Kits, and I suppose I can always put Mickey Spillane covers on the books and sell them when....if, we get back. I'm sure we'd be much better prepared if we took them with us, though."

" Alright, John," said Norman a while later, when the odd flagon of wine had helped calm our nerves. " Break out the Asimov Kits and let's see what we've got to do."

\* \* \* \* \*

" Damnation, Keith," I exclaimed, as we hacked our way through the now gigantic growth of the Shorrocks Lawn, " I wish Norman would get Ina to cut the lawn more often; I mean, you would have thought he would have made some effort in that direction knowing of our imminent adventure."

" He won't have it cut," replied Keith, " it gives him an advantage at Croquet, and besides, he has this theory...."

" What theory, Keith ?"

" Well, he believes that if Ted White writes enough columns for OUTWORLDS he will, eventually, mow his way through Bebington."

" But, that's ridiculous! Ted couldn't get his mower across the Atlantic....or could he....there has been this rumour that he walks across the Potomac daily to work, come to think of it. Hmmm."

However, high though the grass now appeared to us, it was not proving as impenetrable as we'd first feared, when, having left Norman and Still at base-camp, we set forth into the unknown. It was way, way above our now minituarised heads, but the stalks were reasonably amenable to Tony's toll-steel croquet mallet, and with him in the lead we were making fair progress towards - we hoped - the apple tree and The Great Mystery.

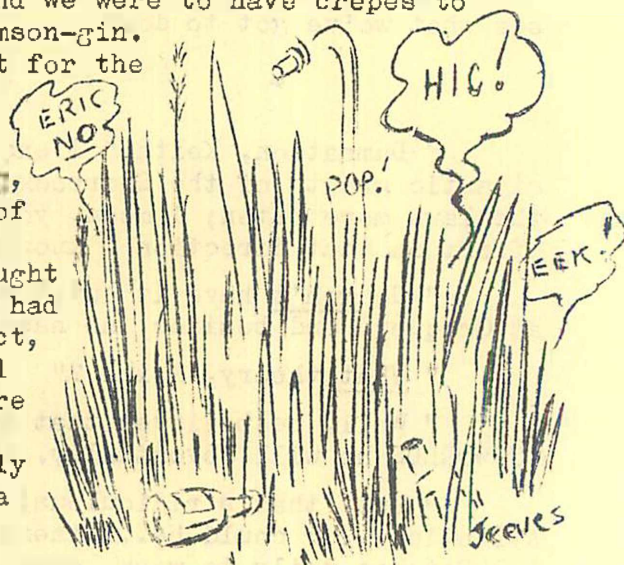
We were slowed somewhat at first because nowone had thought to bring a compass, but this dilemma was resolved when it was realised that due to John Roles familiarity with the esoteric religions of the Orient, he always came out pointing east when, eyes bandaged, we rotated him rapidly. The fact that we were actually supposed to be heading south didn't then present too much of a problem for our combined intellects - even though John began to veer several points off course due to dizziness.

What we had expected to be our greates hazard, the insect life of the garden, wasn't, so far, proving to be any great problem. There was the very occasional rustling in the undergrowth, and huge variecoloured things would whoosh overhead in alarming manner from time to time - reminiscent of a 707 in search of its mate - but otherwise, we seemed to be scaring the local fauna more than it was scaring us. Since they'd never encountered anything that looked like us before, this was perhaps understandable!

There had been an initial moment of panic as we set out from base when Marge Nuttall screamed, "...what's that horrible hairy thing over there!!" But when she realised it was only .stripped-for-action Ramsey Campbell ( who had insisted on wearing leopard-skin y-fronts with his solar topee), we were able to calm her down with only a small depletion of our Chablis stock.

Our first real fright came after we set up camp for the night in a clearing we'd hacked out of the ever-encompassing greenery. The girls were getting supper together; it wasn't to be a heavy meal, but they'd had the forethought to provide for us well. We'd have the rest of the Chablis to drink, and there was some rather fine Bordeaux that we'd managed to bring along without Norman knowing ( bottled in the vineyard, of course), and Ina was doing a cheese fondue for starters; Marge and Beryl were working on the main course of Pork Creole a la Spanier, and we were to have crepes to follow before the gaelic coffee and the damson-gin. A good, homely meal, that should see us fit for the no doubt hazardous, day to come.

I was remarking to Stanley that we should note map-references for the clearing, as it might prove useful in our next game of Croquet...when, a most unusual sequence of sounds permeated the air. At first we thought someone had brought along their stereo and had accidentally tuned into Radio One....in fact, we had to forceably restrain Norman Weedall from doing the Watusi, so that we could more easily concentrate on this interruption of our idyll. It was weird, polyphonic, harshly rythmic in nature, vaguely reminiscent of a joint-session of the MJQ and The Stones. And it wasn't coming from very far away!





We'd have to investigate! Everyone was agreed on this...but everyone was also agreed that it wasn't going to be them who did the investigating! "Allright, allright, we'll use the poker-dice to decide who goes," suggested Tony, "that'll be a fair way."

Some few minutes later, Keith, Stanley, and I didn't agree with him; and were quite perturbed at his unusual reluctance to try for double-or-quits. However, putting a brave front on it, we shouldered our bows, did our best to st p our quivers quivering, picked up our machete's and trod, carefully, forth.

The weird cacophony increased in volume as we stealthily approached its source; as we got closer, and closer the very earth seemed to tremble beneath our feet. It sounded, as Stanley more or less calmly remarked, "like an Elephant Fertility Rite scored by Stravinsky in one of his blacker moods, and played by the second Herman Herd!"

A baleful glow lit what little of the sky ahead we could see, and the greenery took on a decided tinge of puce as, belly down, we wormed our way the last few yards to our goal. Stanley, having taken more of the chablis than Keith and I, was bravely leading. "Psssst," he exclaimed, as he wriggled closer.

"You're lucky!" we rejoined, sotto voce.

"It's HIM!" he further exclaimed.

"Stanley, it can't be," I hissed, "...you must be mistaken, I know the British sphere of influence is diminishing...but, it can't be Him!" I paused to genuflect. "It can't be Harrison. He of the Noble Visage, the Impeccable Palate, Savior of Hemispheres, Bulwark of The Western World, Doyen of The Buenos Aires Dockland Jet-Set..."

"No, you fool...not Him, him...von Neumann. I'd know that piranha desecrated probocis anywhere, that hideous corgi-savaged skin, that evil miasmatic odour, that dark satanic scowl...."

"Oh, shut up, Stanley," I suggested, "here we are possibly in dire peril and certainly most uncomfortable positions, and all you can do is wax lyrical! What's he doing? What's happening?"

"Well," he said, somewhat more calmly, "I don't want to go into too much detail regarding the horrible sight that presents itself to my eyes so soon after such an excellent repast, but....it would appear that he has found a way to communicate with the common cock-roach (for such they appear to be), to listen to the house-louse, to talk to the tiny lepidoptera. I would suppose..." He paused for consideration; "and this is only an educated guess y' understand, that he intends to train them in Kung Fu or some such, increase them to giant-size by using the Asimov Process in reverse....and, inflict yet further horrors on Us All!"

It was obviously time for a council of war; we withdrew as silently as possible from the ghastly gathering, we must decide what had to be done. And quickly, for if we delayed, not only might this horrible horde sense our presence, but all the crepes would be eaten before we got back to camp.

"What can we do, what can we do, what can we do?" queried Stanley, savouring his lines in an attempt to calm himself.

"Run like hell," suggested Keith, realistically.

And after only a short period of deliberation, we accepted that this was the best thing to do.

\* \* \* \* \*

Back at camp; we told the others what we had seen. That they were in positively dire danger if von Neumann and his insect minions discovered our presence - we didn't see why we should be the only ones there scared-stiff!

"At least," said Stanley, "we have now discovered what we are up against, the true enormity of our task (which, incidentally, I am in favour of giving up...), the nature of this new threat to civilisation, and what is wrong with Norman's apple-tree."

"Eh, what?", we all exclaimed.

"Yes, I have solved the mystery. It must be obvious that von Neumann has been once more at the root of the problem. You will agree, of course, that alcohol can improve ones comprehension? Give the brain powers that it did not have before - have not we all," he enquired, "experienced in that brief limbo before passing-out, moments of sheer cosmic knowledge? That arch-fiend von Neumann must have discovered that by tapping Norman's apple-tree - quite probably in much the same way that the infidel Malay gather rubber - and then injecting the insects, that this improves their brain-power. Sufficient, at least, to obey his evil commands."



We applauded - quietly, this fine exhibition of intellectual reasoning. So Stanley was probably right, but what were we going to do about it...what was the solution?

As this query came to all our minds, Stanley held up his bottle again for silence. "Yes," he proclaimed, "and I have the answer...The Solution. Obviously, we cannot defeat von Neumann and his horde by force of arms, but think, all we have to do is block his access to the tree - without this alcoholic-serum the insects will soon lose their new-found intelligence, and von Neumann his power over them. What we must do then, and it will mean hours of long, hard work for us all, is to dig a deep trench between their camp and the tree. We must labour long, and deep, perhaps we will run out of supplies, certainly there will be hardship...but the thought that we are, after all, saving civilisation (and, without You Know Who) will be our succour...."

"Er...Stanley," I attempted to get his attention and that of the others above the excited hubbub. "Wouldn't we be able to do the job more easily if we revert to full-size first!?"

His rejoinder was lost in the noise of the somewhat rapid exodus towards base-camp, Norman, The Still, and the little bottles labelled "Drink Me".....

FIN.

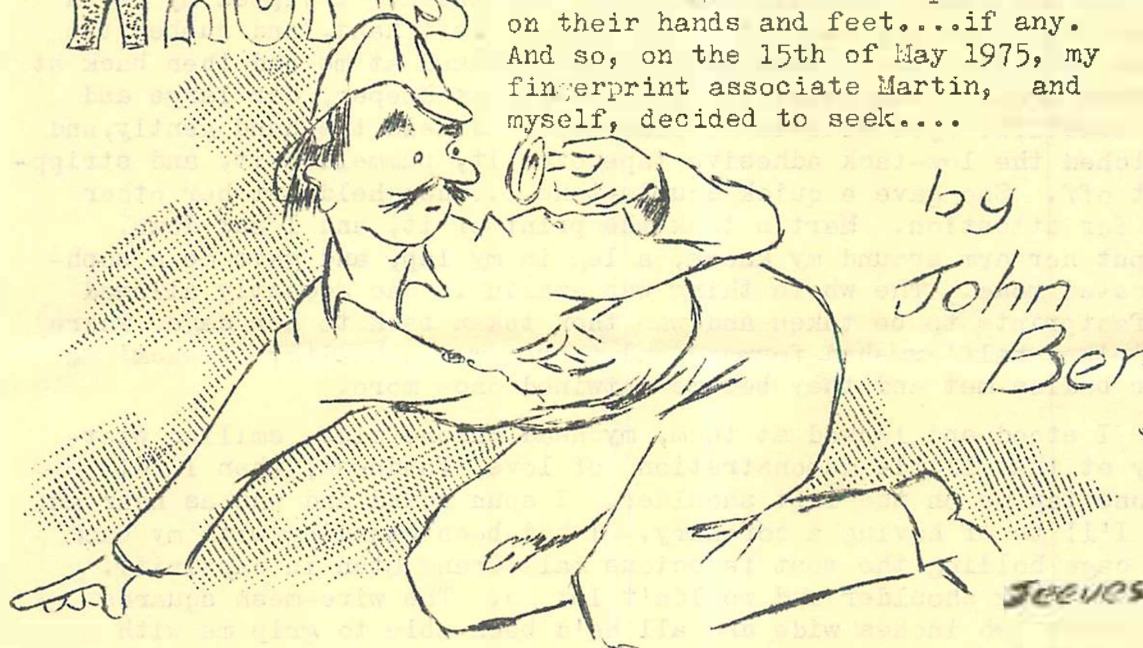


# NEW

# Whorls

One day, in a photographic magazine, I saw a photo of the foot of a primate ( not the ecclesiastical type ). The lighting of the foot threw the hairs into a halo-like relief, but it also revealed minute ridges of skin on the sole, heel and toes. I had heard that primates had fingerprints, but this particular phenomena to my knowledge has never been fully described in literature, even in the authoritative LIVING PRIMATES. I made up my mind to discover for myself exactly what sort of ridge detail the primates had on their hands and feet....if any. And so, on the 15th of May 1975, my fingerprint associate Martin, and myself, decided to seek....

by  
John  
Berry



Martin and I arrived at the Zoo at 2pm, by appointment, and were taken to the Primate House. I carried my heavy fingerprint kit, which contained equipment for using various techniques to obtain fingerprints. Fingerprinting of cadavers is difficult because of contraction of the fingers and resultant rigor mortis, and instead of using black ink and a roller which is a messy business, I have found that black powder brushed over the fingers, and then lifted on small white adhesive squares gives a much clearer result. Another method, especially of obtaining cadavers palm prints, is to again brush the area's with black powder, and then lift the impressions by using wide strips of semi-adhesive tape, and transferring the result to acetate sheets. In both cases the resultant impressions are viewed through acetate sheeting. We decided to use this field trip as a preliminary to our main work; in other words, to experiment with various methods of obtaining primate fingerprints so that our future research could be properly controlled in our attempts to, ultimately, obtain hand and feet impressions of all primates ( over 180 different species ).

The Head Keeper introduced us to his two assistant Keepers, who appeared to be amazed that men should be prepared to use their own time to fingerprint primates, but at the same time offered and gave complete co-operation. When we entered the Monkey House it was like entering a lunatic asylum, as I know from personal experience, but not, I hasten to add, as a patient. There were screams, loud bangings, a continuous hubbub of strange unreal sounds. It was suggested that we should try and fingerprint a young, female, orang-utan first; Suki, who had been reared by humans and was said to be very easy to handle.

We went to the cage in which two orang-utans were clutching each other, obviously not in an amatory manner, rather as though they felt more secure trying to become one entity. Gently, accompanied by reluctant screams, the Keeper removed Suki's temporary symbiote and walked her over to us. She smiled modestly, and sat on the Keeper's lap, one arm slung nonchalantly around his neck. I dipped my brush in the black powder, shook it, held Suki's left hand, and rubbed the powder over it. She looked at her hand, looked at me and then back at the hand again. She swivelled to look at the Keeper, her large and very beautiful eyes wide in bewilderment. I held the hand gently, and stretched the low-tack adhesive tape over it, pummelled it, and stripped it off. She gave a quick double-take....then held out her other hand for attention. Martin took the print of it, and I sat down. She put her arm around my neck, a leg in my lap, and gave me a sophisticated moue. The whole thing was amazing. She modestly allowed her footprints to be taken and was then taken back to her cage, where her 'other-half' rushed forward and there was a healthy 'thwack' as their bodies met and they became entwined once more.

I stood and looked at them, my head on one side, smiling wistfully at that little demonstration of love, fondness, when I felt someone tap me on the left shoulder. I spun round and was as near as ever I'll be of having a coronary. I had been standing with my back to a cage holding the most ferocious male Orang Utan in captivity. It gripped my shoulder and wouldn't let go. The wire-mesh squares were about two inches wide and all he'd been able to grip me with was the stub of a finger and thumb, but they were flexed rigid. His face was huge, and the little piggy eyes met close together over his nose, having the wide open countenance of a hen looking into a bottle. He was covered in long shaggy sandy hair. For some reason, probably because he was so engrossed trying to interpret my gibbering, he let go. He turned his back on me, and crossed his cage stealthily, his hands raised above his head. He was as broad as a garage door. I didn't want Martin to think I'd lost interest in our project, but I felt it opportune to inform him that I certainly was not going to print that one!

Claude was a wild chimpanzee. He was in his cage behaving most ferociously, throwing piles of hay about and himself bodily at the wire mesh of his cage. His screaming was horrible to listen to.

"We'll print him next," announced one of our friendly keeper's. I was petrified with fear, but as soon as the keeper opened the cage, the chimp smiled and walked casually across to us. He appeared to be -

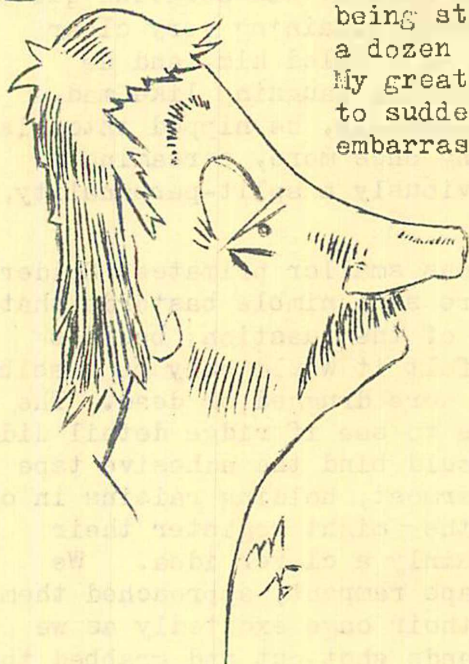


completely unconcerned, but when I felt his hand it was sweating quite profusely. We repeated the powdering process, obtaining very clear impressions of his feet. When we finished we tickled him, and he covered himself in all directions, like a child, laughing like mad. We shook hands with him, and waving affectionately, he nipped into his cage again. And then he became a wild thing once more, screaming at us, and acting in an aggressive manner. Obviously a split-personality, a diagnosis with which the Keeper agreed.

We moved to a cage inhabited by various smaller primates; Spider Monkey's, Lemur's, etc. Obviously they were such nimble bastards that catching one and fingerprinting it was out of the question; besides their hands and feet were so small that I felt it would only be possible to obtain their finger impressions if they were drugged or dead. The main thing with these smaller primates was to see if ridge detail did, indeed, exist. The Keeper suggested we should bind the adhesive tape around our fingers with the tacky side uppermost, holding raisins in our palms; thus when they dived for the fruit, they might register their hand impressions on the tape. It was certainly a clever idea. We picked up a handful of raisins, and with tape rampant, approached them. They looked at us and gripped the wire of their cage excitedly as we approached. Swift as lightning, little hands shot out and grabbed the fruit. I felt the hands briefly on the tape; unwrapped it and examined the impressions left. They were unfortunately of poor quality, but one fantastic thing did become clear. Ridge detail was present. Little portions of palm showed exactly the same ridge detail that we humans have. Surely this is of some considerable significance in the realms of evolution, which I shall comment on later.

Martin continued the experiments in the vain hope of perhaps obtaining the impression of a complete finger or palm. The little hands shot out so quickly that they upset the raisins, and with a curse, Martin bent down to retrieve them. I saw the corners of Martin's lips curl downwards as he examined the raisins in his open cupped palm. I certainly don't wish to gloat over such an unhygienic error, but it didn't need an expert to diagnose that what he now had in his hands were not raisins. Nevertheless, before he could deposit it, little hands shot out, grabbed, and ate with ferocious speed. They didn't come back any more, but looked at us with disappointed eyes from the far corner of their cage.

We moved on to the Gibbons. I didn't like the look of them, and a different technique was again required. Being inquisitive but timorous beasts, they approached us somewhat warily, clinging to the wire mesh. Again it was obvious that they weren't going to condescend to sit quietly down and offer us their hands and feet as the Orang Utan and Chimp had done. Therefore we had to be satisfied with confirmation that ridge detail did exist. Once again we utilised the tape-round-the-hand method. We didn't use raisins, but depended on their curiosity to at least reach out. One devil with his head on one side, teeth bared, made a grab for the tape, but instead of quickly withdrawing his hand, he gripped the tape firmly. This put me in a difficult position, because I immediately grabbed the other end, and a tug-of-war ensued. I felt that if I could retrieve the tape there might easily be a vestige of ridge detail on it, and at the same time, I didn't think it did my ego any good for a low I.Q. primate to out-manoeuvre me.



He began to tug really hard, and I felt my hand being steadily drawn towards the wire mesh and a dozen keen little faces. Christ, he was strong. My great error was anticipating that he was going to suddenly let go, not from any sneaky ploy to embarrass me, but because of my superior strength finally getting the upper hand. So, naturally, you'll appreciate that I was partly engrossed in ensuring that I didn't suddenly fly backwards against Garth's cage - Garth being a full-grown homicidal gorilla. So, whilst my attention was fully taken up with looking anxiously over my shoulder, and trying to balance myself so as not to go in that direction, the blasted Gibbon gave a vicious pull, and the side of my head banged against a steel stanchion on the Gibbon's door. It hurt like mad, and at the same time I heard the Gibbon give a screech of triumph as he ate the tape.

Speedily leaving that section of cages in case the occupants began to get superiority-complexes, we moved to another Chimpanzee House. Martin and I stood and watched an almost-human family group at rest. A mature chimp lay on straw, head casually supported by one hand. Two baby chimps rolled about around him, and an attentive mother chimp sat back proudly looking at her offspring. The father chimp slowly got to his feet. He stood up and stretched himself, yawned, and walked over to us. He put his head on one side, and gripped the bars; pulled himself up to our height. His face was about six inches from ours, when, without obvious premeditation, he sprayed us both with greenish-tinged spittle. His aim was good, he couldn't miss. I hope I didn't look as froth-covered as Martin did, and Martin said, "I hope I don't look as froth covered as you do!" The chimp, meanwhile, climbed down, strolled back to his intimate circle, assumed the recumbent position, and sneered triumphantly. The Keeper, trying hard to hide a smirk, bent to a nearby tap and took a mouthfull of water. With cheeks puffed out, he took up our previous position close to the bars. He looked at the chimp, fixed him with a beady eye and beckoned. The chimp changed his reclining position slightly, yawned again, and then looked away. The Keeper's face grew red, and a vein I hadn't noticed before throbbed frighteningly on his forehead. After a moment, he had no recourse but to dribble the water out, and sneak away so that he wouldn't lose face....and we proffered our sincere thanks and left the zoo, for the same reason.

\* \* \* \* \*

Our study of the prints we obtained (together with samples from other zoo's) is due to be published shortly. Suffice it to say at this stage, that ridge detail on primates and humans is exactly the same. That patterns on the fingers, palms and feet follow human patterns closely, and that any reasonable person faced with such evidence must concede that somewhere along the line there were common ancestry. ...John Berry.



I first came across the name Alan Hunter when 'STARDOCK' published a Folio of his work in 1970. Alan was originally a pro-artist for NEW WORLDS back in 1950, and then entered fandom 'backwards' via fanzine illustration and the sadly aborted Fantasy Art Society. He left both pro' and fanwork in 1958, when the bottom was falling out of the S-F market, and started his own news-agents business. After ten years of being bedevilled by the tribulations of early-rising ( extra-early rising) and S.E.T. ( Remember S.E.T. ? The V.A.T. of the Sixties.) he returned to the 8.30 - 5 o'clock life of a technical illustrator and, fortunately for us, fan artist....plus, on at least two occasions, fan-writer. In this article, Alan concisely covers a few points which tend to be misunderstood, or left entirely unnoticed by the casual 'art critic', (ie, the drunken fan by the bar, or any other Secret Master of Fandom,) who is quite likely to blurt out the exact phrases Alan opens with. Of course, every artist has some distinctive lines or format which show through unless deliberately disguised and Alan's work is deeply embedded in the late 40's/ early 50's era, yet his accompanying illo's display a good variety of styles - enough, perhaps, to make such critics refrain from their cliché remarks!

.....Dave Rowe.

# THE ARTIST WRITES

A very  
distinctive  
style



" I could recognise his drawings anywhere": " He has a very distinctive style": " I wish I had as much originality".

Remarks such as these are frequently heard when a fan is talking about his favourite artists, they are intended to be expressions of praise. For most amateur artists believe that to become a successful artist they have first to develop an individual style, to which end they devote a great deal of time and effort. Usually they are driving whatever talent they possess into the ground - killing it with frustration.

There are two basic misconceptions implicit in this attitude towards style. The first is that referred to as "style" is most frequently "technique". Because one artist uses fine, open lines with large areas of solid black, and draws tall, lean figures while another artist draws muscular figures with square-jawed faces in a thick, expressive line, may be simply the difference between laying on the ink with a pen or a brush. Style is a combination of age, experience, emotion, belief - in fact, the complete expression of the artist himself. Technique is merely the means he uses to transfer that expression to paper.

The second error is in believing that the way a professional artist presents his work is always of his own choosing and a true reflection of his personality. When an illustrator who has gained some popularity, continually presents his drawings in a certain manner he is often applauded for his individuality, although it more probably indicates that he has become trapped in a commercial snare.





This snare is composed of a great variety of subtle parts, but the most usual are speed and customer relations. Obviously, if an artist adopts one technique and restricts himself to it, he soon gains sureness and speed - but he also builds himself a cell of boredom wherein his art becomes nothing more than a job to earn a living. And Editors have an annoying habit of pushing him gently, but firmly, into this cell of his own construction and locking the door. After a few commissions the Editor will remark that such and such a drawing in his magazine was very well received and popular with the Readers. Could he produce more of a similar type? Anxious to please, he does so. And soon is channelled into that individuality that builds a reputation and a burden simultaneously.

I have been describing, of course, the professional Editor who pays for drawings published and consequently is entitled to call the tune to which the artist must dance. The fan Editor is something entirely different. He does not pay, pleads rather than dictates, and permits the amateur artist full scope for his imagination. Therefore it distresses me to see fan artists limiting themselves to a narrow range of subjects and techniques in the belief that they are developing individuality.

Today the aspiring artist has a terrific range of instruments and impedimenta he can use. There are pens of almost limitless variety - ball, fibre, Rotring, Gillott, lettering, round-writer, even double-pointed nibs. There are aids such as mechanical stipples, embossed boards, scraperboards. And the even greater variety of invented aids, limited only by the imagination. Amongst these latter are such items as the ends of matchsticks, which can be shaped with a penknife, cotton wool and sponges, all of which can be dipped in ink and then pressed or dragged over the drawing surface. Variations such as these can change the production of a drawing from a tedious representation of reality into an exploration across new frontiers of art and expression.

By familiarising himself with a wider variety of techniques, the developing artist widens his horizons and allows full scope for his abilities, rather than restricting his aptitudes until all enthusiasm has been squeezed away. But this does not imply that technique is everything. To become art, a drawing must also have content. This is where integrity and discipline, the foundations of style, are necessary. Even abstract art, of non-representational lines and shapes, must have an inner harmony controlled by the artist. A drawing without intention or meaning amounts to nothing.

This seems to me an ideal point at which to digress a little into another fundamental consideration about which there is a great deal of unwarranted prejudice. That is the much deplored practice of copying.

Now let us be quite clear on this. Every drawing ever produced is a copy. Whether the artist drew from nature, photographs, the work of other artists, or memory - it is still copying. And even a careful copy of another artists work is excusable if it is done for a reason such as a better understanding of technique. It is only inexcusable if the copying is the result of laziness or timidity, from either of which the artist himself is the one who will suffer most.

To deserve serious consideration, a drawing must contain something additional by the artist; it must not all be second-hand. For instance, Mickey Mouse has been copied so frequently that he has become a pictorial cliché. Yet I have seen drawings of him, in the most unlikely magazines, treated with such originality and imagination as to be worthy of critical attention. It is not the subject but the presentation wherein the creativity lies.

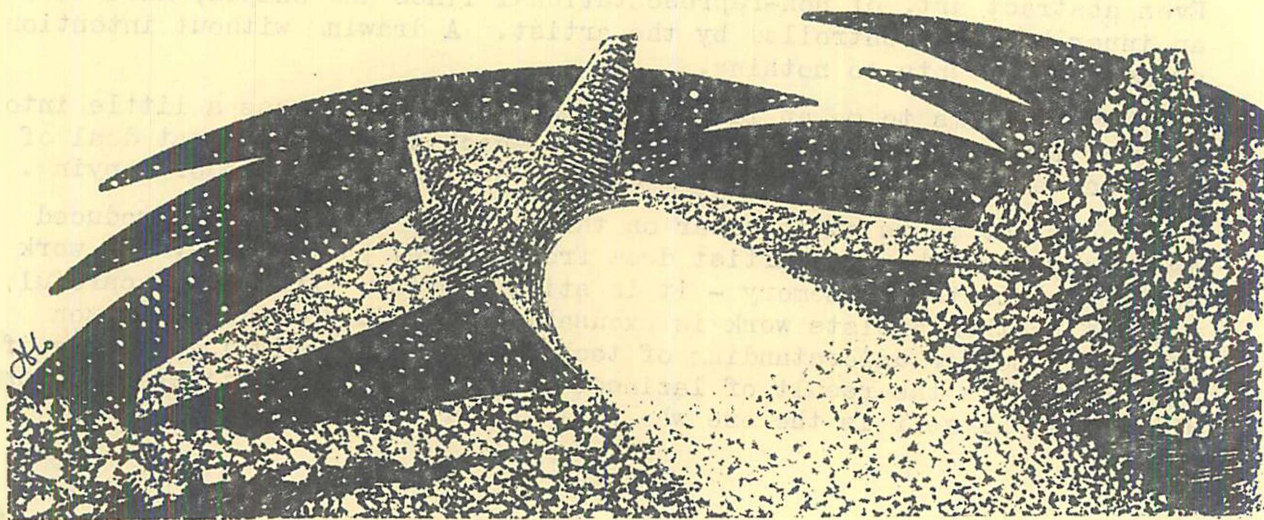
So, a few words to all you fan artists who may be wondering what to draw and how to start drawing it. Choose something which interests you, whether it be photograph, drawing, an actual object or a memory of one (it is helpful to keep a file or scrapbook of cuttings from magazines or newspapers). Then copy it in pencil onto a sheet of paper, roughly or as detailed as you choose. The aim is not to produce a facsimile but to try and capture whatever appeals to you in the subject chosen. When you feel the pencil drawing has gone far enough, ink it over in black. But do not stick to the traditional pen or brush. Think of yourself as an explorer, seeking new ways to put ideas onto paper; be experimental!

If, at first, you do not like the result, remember that practice and experience is the only way to improve. As a true explorer, you should want to continue until, one day, you will suddenly realise that you have discovered a new land which only you can see, and in the process have learned a new language with which to describe it to other people.

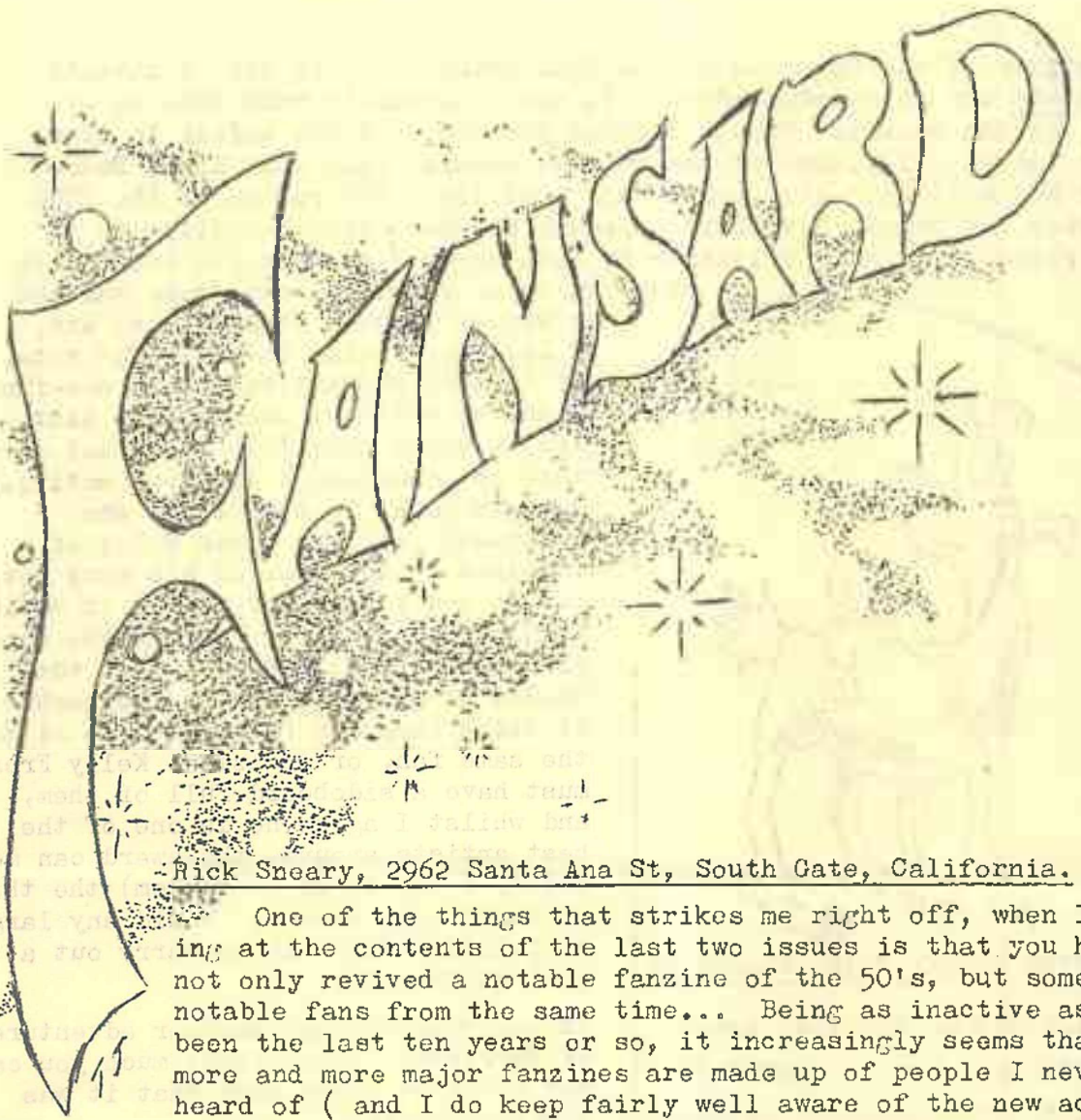
Then, you will truly have become an artist.

....Alan Hunter.

// Notes for the technique minded - Two sizes of Rotring pen were used to draw the witch and cauldron. On the space scene, the patterning came from a sponge dipped in ink. The self-portrait is in ink and crayon on oil-sketched paper.//







Rick Sneary, 2962 Santa Ana St, South Gate, California.

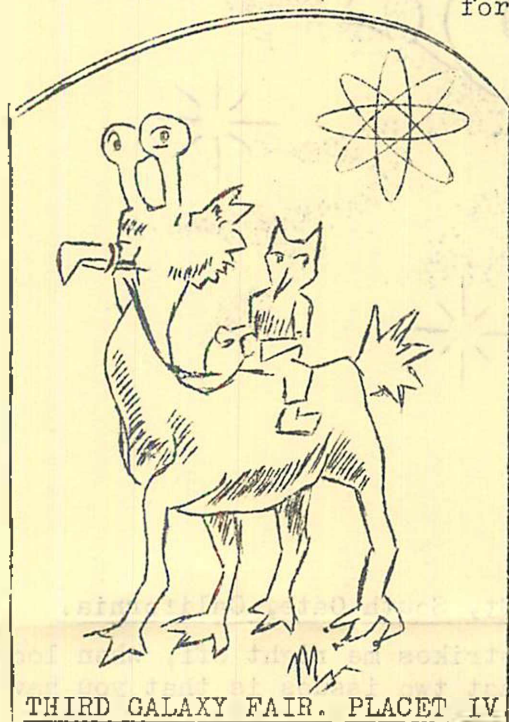
One of the things that strikes me right off, when looking at the contents of the last two issues is that you have not only revived a notable fanzine of the 50's, but some notable fans from the same time... Being as inactive as I've been the last ten years or so, it increasingly seems that more and more major fanzines are made up of people I never heard of ( and I do keep fairly well aware of the new actifans). I don't know that the old-timers have more talent, but like the tunes of the 40's, they sound better on these old ears... I've noted that there seems to be minor gathering places of older fans in this country, too...I was thinking about TABEBUIAN from Dave Jenrette, who regularly draws on a readership that have been around longer than most. (( I gather he has no prejudice about drawing on younger readers, Rick, it's just that Mardee won't let him!!)) Also, TAB in some kind of way seems to reflect the attitudes held by fans of the 50's (or what they have matured into). I came up with the term "middle-Fandom Fanzines," to differentiate between those from First Fandom, or Current Fandom. Not an indication that they are better, but it does seem that "we" are drawn to those we have more in common with, in interest, age, and history... Ed Connor's and the Coulson zines would also be in this class. I'm inclined to think of Dave Locke's AWRY as one too...more from adoption of attitudes than his age. I would say this, we remember when it was still a proud and lonely thing to be a fan...These new sprats will never know what it is, to hunger for a crazed word of ones own kind....

Speaking of crazed words - I can't help but comment on your remarks in EGG. I can't say I agree with you that the Fan Awards Rules

are winner of the Fughead Of The Year Award....after all, I haven't heard all the fugheaded ideas. It would certainly rank tops on my poll, at the moment. Though I think you are probably unfair to blame Feder for it all...some of the wordage sounded like what Linda Bushyager had written. I've campaigned - mildly - for reform of the HUGO for over ten years, but their approach has more negative sides to it than pluses. My main criticism of both systems is that you can't vote

for something you don't read/see, and the new system doesn't change that. And, by limiting voting to a "craft" vote, it doesn't prevent tasteless neo-fan ( and we all know neofans are tasteless without catsup.) votes, but does that of experienced but less active... Case in point is Bob Bloch, who obviously gets and reads a lot of fanzines by evidence of his many loc, yet he can't vote for editor or artist. (( Good point, Rick. And on the topic of HUGO's I would suggest that what is needed is a limitation on the number of times they can be awarded to either the same fan, or magazine. Kelly Freas must have a sideboard full of them, and whilst I agree he is one of the best artists around, the award can mean little ( to him or to fandom) the third or forth time around. Would any large circulation fnz care to carry out a poll on this ??))

It was good to read another adventure of Harrison. There isn't much you can say about it other than that it was deeply enjoyed.



THIRD GALAXY FAIR. PLACET IV

SYMBIOTE OF THE YEAR Award.

Plitz and Crugl. BENESH III.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Like you, I wish Bulmer had said what it liked-disliked about current s-f... I would certainly say that I'm reading less and enjoying it less these days, and mainly as you say, because there is too much style and not enough story. I rather dislike authors, too, who say they are trying to improve s-f by writing the way they do. (( I don't necessarily dislike them, but I do suspect them...)) As for numbered fandoms. By most opinion, Ellison and friends were not 7th fandom...they only claimed that title...but were a mere transistion. (( You mean they were worked by remote control ?)) For me, 7th fandom lasted from the death of QUANDRY, to the close of the London Worldcon. U.S. was at a low ebb, except in the apa's, where as British Fandom was highly active, and producing top fnz. Then 8th Fandom started in 1958, with FANAC and small, light-hearted zines; a lot of new travelling and fannish friendships. About 1962 there was a turn to more serious and bigger fanzines, and I've thought of that as 9th Fandom. That lasted 3-4 years...but where we are today I couldn't say. Since we lack Focal Points, as you pointed out, it is hard/impossible to see the trends throughout fandom, that used to be the signs of an Age.



I feel for Jeeves and his complaint that fan artists are under-paid in ego-boo. I rarely comment on artwork because I can't think of anything to say. After you have said you liked it or didn't, there has been little I could ever think of to say....and, because I don't know anything about art, I don't know how to comment on it. Art is a statement, that I can agree with or disagree with, but not add to... Where as a written statement leaves me a chance for me to compare my opinion to the writers - not knowing how to make meaningful comment on artwork, I don't do it. It might be an interesting idea if some fan artist like Jeeves were to write up guides to appreciation of fan art. That is a seriously intended suggestion, though I'm not sure that at my stage of boneheadedness I could learn anything from it, it might give others to think. More fan artists should write in and comment on others art, so we dolts and art-dummies could see how its done. (( I'd like to receive some artwork commenting on artwork, that could be interesting.))

Harry Bell, 9 Lincoln St, Gateshead. NE8 4EE.

I am still, and always have been, astonished by Jim Cawthorn's hand-cuts. Back in the good old PaDs days I was considered to be a dab hand at hand-cutting stencils, but even then I knew I couldn't come anywhere near Jim's work in old ERBANIA's and CAMBER and HUNGRY and...

I noted with some interest your remarks about Focal Points in general and Gannetfandom in particular. I agree the Gannets were doing pretty well up to Tynecon, but I don't think it was only the staging of the con ((You mean when it collapsed onto the committee who were drinking underneath it ?!)) that took the wind out of our sails. The reason we worked so well before Tynecon was that we had the active support of Ratfandom and the MaD Group, the only two other centres of fanzine fanac in Britain.

After Tynecon, not only were we exhausted, but it seemed that the other two groups had faded, too. If one of the other groups had taken over the lead and encouraged flagging fanac in the other groups, we might have a healthier U.K. fandom than we have today.

I can't agree with Darroll's views of personal-zines being the New Age of Fanzines. Personal-zines are all very well for those already well known in fandom, and they do make very efficient letter-substitutes, but they're letting an awful lot of talent go to waste. There really has to be a few genzines around for people to contribute to - people who either can't or don't want to produce personal-zines. (( And to provide something for those who publish personal-zines to talk about; other than their own possibly 'peccable persons!)) It does seem short-sighted to ignore the changes that fandom goes through on a more or less cyclic basis, and I'm surprised that an established fan like Darroll seems to think fandom had reached its ultimate expression in the personal-zine. Certainly, I don't find STULTICAE LACUS anywhere near as interesting as the old SPINCE (not its later incarnation).

Alan Hunter unfortunately does not seem to take into account the social aspects of sf fandom - what I'm sure makes fandom for most people. Even Ian Penman, the only real comix fan in Gannetfandom (editor of ORACLE and ARMEGEDDON) finds comix fandom a pale thing next to sf fandom, and reckons it hasn't shown any sign of growth or maturity in the last five years.

Milton F. Stevens, 14535 Saticoy St, Van Nuys, California.

Your editorial in Triode 21 raises one overwhelming question in my mind. Don't you folk know when you are well off? Whenever I receive a fanzine bemoaning the state of British Fandom, everything sounds so great. Small conventions, a few fanzines, one apa, and glorious apathy as far as the eye can see. You people have the fannish equivalent of sitting on a beach in Tahiti. (( YOU have never seen Brian Burgess in a grass skirt, otherwise you would not make such mind-blasting statements!)) I know that my reaction to the situation is not unique. Many of the more active fans in the U.S. have times when they feel that fandom is a rat race and would gladly return to the quieter times of the past. (( I wasn't bemoaning the lack of numbers in British fandom, Milt, our conventions have mushroomed alarmingly in size, too. But at the time of writing there was a hiatus in quality fanzine publishing - there still is, but I think the situation has improved as a result of my editorial....))

However, if you are still determined to abandon your idyllic state, I might make a few suggestions. The first would be to try starting a bi-weekly local apa. That might sound like a pretty silly suggestion, since the current problem is lack of activity. How could a bi-weekly apa survive when a quarterly apa doesn't draw much interest? For one thing, short period apa's are very addictive. Also, the type of zines which appear in a short period apa look easy to do. People who are not normally publishing fans start thinking that doing a page or two of mailing comments might be fun and it couldn't be too difficult. In other words, they get sucked in. I know how it works, because it happened to me eleven years ago. My knowledge of British fandom is not detailed enough for me to suggest which fan centre might be most likely to start such a project. Since most of the local apas in the United States usually have a number of contributors from a couple thousand miles away, any British local apa ought to be able to get contributors from all over England. Especially if a set number of copies are always reserved for speculative members. (( Well, it sounds almost as effective as going round beating each other over the head....in fact, it could well provide an excuse for doing so!))

If that sounds far fetched, how about convincing someone to start a monthly letterzine. Again, the schedule is a matter of prime importance. Quick response encourages more response. (( Unfortunately, it also seems to encourage the post-office to put up their rates again!))

Another idea might be to do an annual summary of British fanzines. Such a publication would list number of fanzines published, number of articles written ( with total page count), and number of locs written. Of course, it would list contributors in order of quantity produced. Come to think of it, a quarterly summary might be better. It makes the competitive aspect more immediate. You might doubt that a simple listing would have that much effect, but from our experience at LASFS, I think that such lists can be very effective. When LASFS started publishing a list of donors to the LASFS Building FUND some people donated money in order to change their positions on the list. If it works with money, it ought to work with anything. (( I like that idea, Milt, and have pleasure in announcing that THE BUILD BENTCLIFFE A BETTER BRANIGAN BASE FUND is now open. Lists of contributors will be updated in each issue of TRIODE, and those top of the list will get Gold Stars by their names.))



I don't know whether any of these suggestions will be helpful, but never let it be said that I'm not willing to help my fellow man along the road to perdition. (( Thanks, Milt, and please let me know if you have any problems that I can pose solutions for.))

Bob Bloch, 2111 Sunset Crest Dr, Los Angeles.

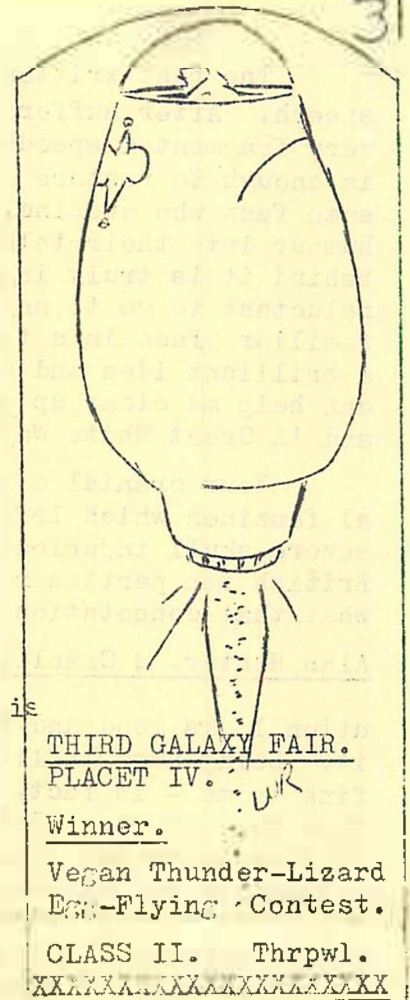
What a pleasure to find TRIODE in my mailbox! I haven't seen a copy since the last time I was in John Brunner's loo - and that one had only a few pages left. (( John say's it was complete when you went in...he wants to know what happened to his file of THE NUDIST as well !?!!))

Whereas the pristine and unadorned issue has been read completely, and with great pleasure. It now remains to be seen who may run across it in my loo. (( Doubt if anyone will pay it second attention when they see the Tucker Graffiti! )) Filing it there is is unfair competition....))

Triode evokes memories of the golden days of Sixth Fandom - perhaps because I've just returned from a convention in Kansas City where quite a few fen emerged from the woodwork; Doc' Barrett and Lou Tabakou, co-founders of the Midwescon were among them. I suspect they showed up spurred by morbid curiosity - waiting to see how I, as Guest of Honor, would be introduced by the effable and scrutable Bob Tucker. But in any case, we fell to nattering about Willis, Shaw, Hoffwoman and other dinosauri. I note with keen pleasure a reference in T21 to Chuck Harris. Now that Lancy has been remembered, Burbee resurrected, and even Tucker exhumed from a mouldering grave, it would seem to me high time that British Fandom rediscover the genius of Harris; truly one of the "originals", not just of fandom but of mankind ( or, 'personkind', if the women; differs prefer). What a talent! And I'm sure a whole new generation of fans have sprung up to whom the very name is unknown. (( Well then, how about an article on him...or, perhaps even better still, how about coming over to next years convention - it's time we saw you again, and that could bring some of the old-gang here out of the woodwork. Even Chuck, mayhap.))

Terry Hughes, 866 N. Frederick St, Arlington, Virginia.

You know, Eric, I expect most of the other Anglofaneds are about ready to strangle you since you seem to have exclusive rights to Jim Cawthorn with admirable assists from Terry Jeeves. All you need to add are Harry Bell and Arthur Thomson. (( Agreed.)) Cawthorn's hand-stencilling once more amazed me. It is just incredible the effect he achieves with his styli and shading plates. An inspired cover depicting the further adventures of Union Jack savior of the space lanes. His Planet Stories folio was an impressive tribute to the magazine and it caught the enthusiastic, yet highly impractical style of the magazine. His double-page spread is a real breath-taker.



The best written part of the fanzine was Bob Shaw's truly funny speech. After suffering through entirely too many very long, very dull, very fragmented speeches at some of the U.S. conventions, Shaw's speech is enough to restore ones sense of wonder. Hopefully it will convince some fans who are inclined to speech-making to put some intentional humour into their talks. The speech is beautifully paced and the concept behind it is truly ingenious. Ever since reading it I have been a bit reluctant to go to any local museums for fear that I might find Bob Shaw's familiar face in a time period where it doesn't belong. (( Yes, it was a brilliant idea and sparks off all kinds of thoughts. And perhaps you can help me clear up one I've had....tell me, was there a 'White House', and 'A Great White Way' before Ted White came on the scene ???))

Your cranial collision theory was very well done. I have seen several fanzines which left me with the impression that the editor had suffered severe skull injuries, or if he hadn't he should have. I have often heard British fan parties referred to as "bashers" but I never fully realised what that connotation meant until I read your editorial.

Alan Hunter, 4 Cranleigh Gardens, Southborne, Bournemouth.

My own contribution looks good and I am delighted with the presentation you have given it. Being used to litho reproduction for my drawings, the heading seems fine to me - in fact, I was most agreeably suprised to see such results from duplicating. But I am wondering if many of your readers would agree. It does upset the tonal balance of the issue and, seen alongside Jim's delicately shaded compositions, it looks positively garish. I suppose you could say it suits the subject. But it does seem to underline the unique appeal of the all-duplicated fanzine, and it will be interesting to see what other readers do have to say about it. That is, assuming anyone does comment - or even notice at all. Terry Jeeves article has sown the seeds of doubt! (( So far, Alan, nowone has commented on this particular point, but it is a good one. However, my intention is to use electro-stencil for any illo that Terry can't master (or, where a fan-artist requests it), but to avoid wherever possible close proximity of these illos to those which are hand-cut. I don't want to be unable to use any good artwork that kind artists send along.))

As a rider to my article on comics, I would like to commend issue no.3 of 'Unknown Worlds of Science Fiction'. More specifically, the strip adaptation of "Repent Harlequin; Said The Ticktockman". Those of you who have read this award-winning story by Harlan Ellison, with its whimsical look at the future, will appreciate how difficult it would be to translate it satisfactorily to the medium of the comic-strip. Yet here we have it, adapted by Roy Thomas and illustrated by Alex Nino. And a most individual and successful adaptation it is, retaining all the zaney humour and serious observation of the original. I cannot think of a better introduction, for the sceptical science-fiction fan, to the points I tried to make about the art of combining word and picture as a means of communication.

In addition the issue contains two articles; one is an interview with Frank Herbert; the other is the history of the S-F Writers of America (( Now that really should lend itself to the comic-strip medium. Bags of gore; and Harlan zooming about all over the place!)) and the Nebula Awards.



33  
Amongst the five strip-stories, another is called '...Not Long Before The End'. This is adapted from a story by Larry Niven. It could be classed as sword and sorcery, but it does contain the first attempt I have seen at an explanation of why sorcery worked in the early days of civilisation yet does not work today. (( de Camp and Pratt did this quite effectively with their Harold O'Shea stories back in UNKNOWN days, Alan.))

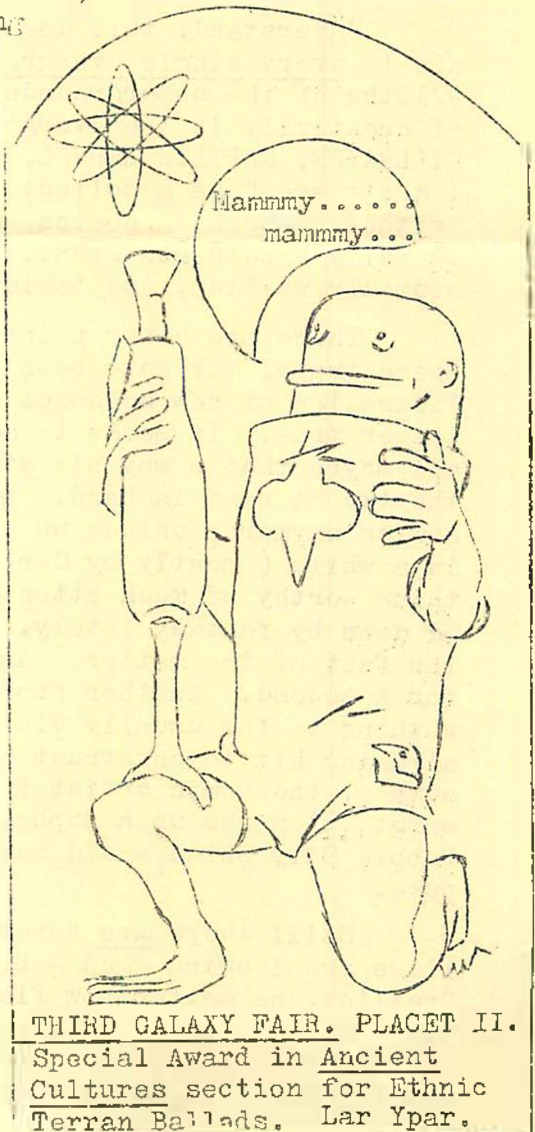
An additional bonus for the British fan, is the Prologue and Epilogue a device used in every issue so far, to bind the greatly varied strip stories into a coherent whole. This uses a substance called SLOW GLASS, the invention of none other than Bob Shaw, to whom full credit is given in the issue. This magazine has been improving steadily since the first issue and seems to have really matured with the third. Issue number four, the latest I have to hand, contains adaptations of Good News From The Vatican by Bob Silverberg, The Enchanted Village by van Vort, and a jaunt into the "classic" age of s-f ( with a special introduction) A Vision Of Venus by Otis Adelbert Kline. Only the future can tell if the magazine maintains this standard. (( It sounds like an interesting experiment, Alan. Obviously it won't seduce me away from a preference to use my imagination to depict the characters - rather than the artists - but, it could, possibly, as you have suggested play a bigger role in standards to come, than it has so far. I hope it won't, but with the constantly lowering standards of literacy, it could.))

Al Sirois, 533 Chapel St, New Haven, Conn.

First thing that caught my eye was the beautiful Cawthorn artwork. I've never seen anything like it on stencil before, and to say that I am impressed doesn't really do him justice. The drawing on page 16, in particular, blew me away. The shading technique is such that it almost looks rendered! That, and the cover, are the two single best pieces...but then, the stuff illoing CLEAN SWEEP was every bit as good.....Beautiful!!

Look, Terry, here's a loc which starts out commenting on artwork!

Yes, artwork and layout were both more than adequate, as far as I am concerned. I have only seen one other British fnz (howcum the American version of that word is fmz ?) (( I suspect the American is the earlier of the two, being an abbreviation for FanMagaZine. The British being Fan-Zine.)) MAYA 7, which was as visually impressive, in a different way. For all the American pre-occupation with design and layout and like that, you folk seem to have it figured out already. But maybe I shouldn't say that, seeing as how I only have two fnz from England. Don't burst my bubble, jack... (( Keith Walker please note!))



THIRD GALAXY FAIR. PLACET II.  
Special Award in Ancient  
Cultures section for Ethnic  
Terran Ballads. Lar Ypar.

Speaking of bubbles, I enjoyed CLEAN SWEEP quite a bit. I gather from certain comments here and there in the zine that this is merely one in a continuing series of the adventures of one Wm. Harrison? ((Oh Yes, He has been Saving The World for something like twenty years - which says a lot for His stamina, if not for His Good Sense!)) Great stuff! Best line: "Pinocchio!" for "Geronimo!" That one had me laughing for a couple of minutes, unable to proceed. One thing, tho....if Flask's PRO had only one leg, how could he be wearing "surplus Army boots"? Perhaps he had draped them all over his smarmy little body? ((Er...yes. This was, of course, just one of those little esoteric comment-hooks you will find in each issue of Triode. Lesser fan-ed's call them typo's!))

I have mixed emotions about Alan Hunter's piece on comics. He is not alone in believing that sf has had its day, but I'm not convinced that switching allegiances to comics is the answer. The two fandoms are, in essence, quite different for one thing; and I think that most people who read sf greatly love the printed word, which leads me to suspect that these people would be somewhat less than satisfied with the quality of writing (and the depth of it) to be found in most comics.

Understand, this doesn't pertain to all comics. But it does pertain to every single overground published in America, at any rate, and 9/10ths of the undergrounds, too. Sure, there are interesting flashes of creativity in the overgrounds every so often...notably in such as KILLRAVEN, CAPTAIN MARVEL, and WARLOCK, but that's pretty much it. I don't speak as a collector, or even a fan, of comics, because I am neither: I work in comics, as an artist. I am currently free-lancing as Wally Wood's assistant. The stuff we've been working on has been stupidly written, and tepidly drawn.

There are other points in this piece which I don't go along with. Space travel may have been the backbone of older sf, but with the proliferation of new sciences - especially the "soft ones" - this is no longer true. It seems to me that Hunter speaks mostly of space-opera, and maybe that's why his attention has been turned to comics lately... the two go hand in hand. But there is no such thing as pure sf in the comics anymore, unless we count a few stories in the Warren zines once in a while (mostly by Corben, who I think is the only guy doing anything worthy of much attention - at least, overground); it's all watered down by fantasy lately. Not that this is inherently bad, but it is the fact of the matter. And it won't satisfy the basic sf reader, not for a second. Another problem, as I see it, is that the comics leave nothing to the usually vivid imaginations of the sf reader. Instead of allowing him to construct his own mind-pictures from the words of the author, the comic artist (often a hack at best, and a lousy artist at worst...) works up a sophomoric and shaky rendering of a BEM or a Bubble City which would make Frank Paul laugh...or, as is more likely, puke.

Still there are hopeful signs. The French and Italian hardback lines are looking good - but, you can't read the damn things! And Druillet, no matter how flashy he is (and he is) still can't hide the fact that he can't draw people very well. Technique is not where its at, gang...you can have all the technique in the world and still not be able to draw worth a damn.



The problem with the undergrounds, such as SKULL ( which Hunter mentions ) is that they are goddam hard to find, especially now that the Supreme Court has spread its cheeks on them. And even SKULL is of uneven quality; tho, it and SLOW DEATH are the best two undergrounds. Except, possibly, for the Schrier books like MEEF and MOTHER'S OATS, and occasional one-shots and Corbenzines.

Comics fandom is both larger and more single-minded than sf fandom. Have you ever seen a comics fanzine ? Give me sf fanzines anyday. I enjoy the disparate viewpoints and talents evident in sf fandom. In comics fandom it's all Doaling or whacko-pow superhero crap or hacken-slash barbarians. Bleah. (( I suspect that 's-f fandom' is probably the only fandom where what is talked about, and written about in fnz bears hardly any relationship to its original subject-source. Which is why people stay with it. I'm excepting those who are new to the field, and those who publish to collect-books.))

I sympathise, empathise, with Terry. I haven't been at it for 25 years, but I have my share of horror stories to tell about being a fan artist. The things that get me are a) losing art in the mail, and b) when the editor receives the stuff but doesn't tell you he'll be using it, and the first you know about it is five months later when the zine arrives full of your art with a cover letter asking for more immediately. Most fan-editors do reply, of course, but I wish they all would. Nothing quite as bad as the incident of Mud and the conflued heads ever happened to me, tho. People have mucked with the art but never as bad as that. One guy wanted to tighten up my brushstrokes on one piece, for crissakes! I immediately write back and said that I would much prefer if he didn't - the strokes were the way they were because that's the technique I used on that part of the drawing. I'm not getting paid for that art, so don't mess with it, Jack. You draw it, you change it. I draw it, you bloody well leave it alone. That's my payment.

Terry seems upset about the fact that a lot of fanartists (myself included) knock off a "doodle", and then add to it " a rather inapt phrase". Well, this stuff can be a lot better than a drawing which took hours! There is such a thing as spontaneity, and I daresay that most of Rotsler's cartoons are much more appealing to more people than most of Eric Mayer's obviously-sweated-over full-pagers. I'm not getting on your case, Terry...I've been known to spend hours on a piece of fanart myself ( why, I don't know...), but I still dig the quickies, too. They are, I think, more fannish.

I guess I really haven't got a hell of a lot more to add, except that there's now way I can say that " the words were lousy"! And I must concur with the Canadian representative, in the last paragraph of his lec. I'm not a British fan either, but TRIODE has a flavour to it which I find extremely appealing. I hope it doesn't change; it's much too good the way it is. (( I suppose you could boil the formula down to that which introduced the Miller Medley's...'Something Old, Something New...Something Borrowed, and Something Blue'. Which statement will no doubt confuse the 'pop' fans.))

Bill Harry, 148a Queensway, London. W2.

I can imagine what levels of consciousness you will transcend when in the company of the LiG mob. Just imagine, all those mystics, yogis, saints, leaders of the drug-culture movement, furiously seeking ways of consciously achieving a trance state when all you have to do to 'get there' is to accept an invitation to a Liverpool Group party!!

Jim Cawthorn, to me, has always been the Governor. When we first became correspondents in the 50's and I received his work it gave me immense pleasure. At the time I was art-editing all of Mike Moorcock's magazines, and I almost thought of packing up my own stuff as I could not compete; there seemed to be a magic about his work. Once I received Jim's illo's I knew that the Sword & Sorcery field, in particular, was his. His illo's are never static, they contain action and movement and his composition, imagination and knowledge of anatomy are first class.

As far as his PLANET STORIES pics are concerned, the illo's stand by themselves, but one wonders what the story behind them is. The cover, for instance.

'Brigitte 7x+ had always admired the Snalians. Even as a schoolgirl she was turned on by photographs of the grey-skinned ~~planet~~, athletic inhabitants of that far planet. Their horns, their sinuous snake-like tongues, their furry ears, they were every young girls dream. Now, five years later, she was astrophysicist on the third terrestrial expedition. That morning, prior to landing, she stood naked in front of the mercury mirror, caressing the slimness of her well endowed form. She clipped on her leather chastity strap, hooked on her metal oxygen bra and snuggled into her ancient David Bowie boots. She was elected to hand over personally to the Snalian Ambassador, the metal scroll of greetings from the Earth Council. A task she looked forward to eagerly, knowing the Ambassador to be one of the planet's most eligible batchelors - and a millionaire to boot. As she climbed down the steel rungs of the ladder, she heard a Snalian making appreciative comments about the choice parts of her anatomy. She almost blushed with pleasure.

Suddenly, her reverie was interrupted by the sinister sound of a laser-beam, and she looked with horror to see Freddie England tearing out the throat of the approaching dignitary. "Freddie, you fool, what are you doing?" she screamed.

"But didn't you hear what he said?"

"Yes, you idiot. He was admiring my legs, commenting on my posterior, drooling over my breasts. But I don't mind that, I wasn't offended, I found it intensely flattering."

"You silly goose," Freddie chuckled, "didn't you know that the Snalians are a race of cannibals?". (( I was about to remark that they don't write 'em like that anymore, Bill; and then I remembered PLANET OF THE APES!))

Alan Hunter's "It's a Comic World", is worth some discussion. I've been interested in comics for nearly thirty years, but don't like the trend in current comic collection. Too much greed and speculation.



I went to my first - and last - comics convention in London. Seeing a pile of Marvel Monster mags I hadn't got on a stall, I went over and picked one up. "You can't have that, I've bought that!" said an aggressive voice. I asked the stall owner if he had any more of the same issue. He pointed out that the aggressive voice had bought all twenty copies of the same mag so that he could re-sell them at inflated prices. There weren't so many collectors as dealers, talking about how much profit they'd made. On another occasion, I went to "Dark They Were and Golden Eyed" and bought a copy of "Unknown Worlds of Science Fiction". It cost me 50pence. I saw the same edition two days later at Marble Arch tube station for 20p. (( You think they should change their name to 'Dark They Were and Beady-eyed'? )) Marvel itself has been encouraging this sort of thing, boasting about how much money earlier editions bring on the market. They also withdrew their American colour issues ("Tomb of Dracula") from Britain to boost sales of the inferior Black and White British edition. (( I gather that they don't play Brag at their conventions, either! ))

Keith Freeman, 128 Fairford Rd, Reading, Berks.

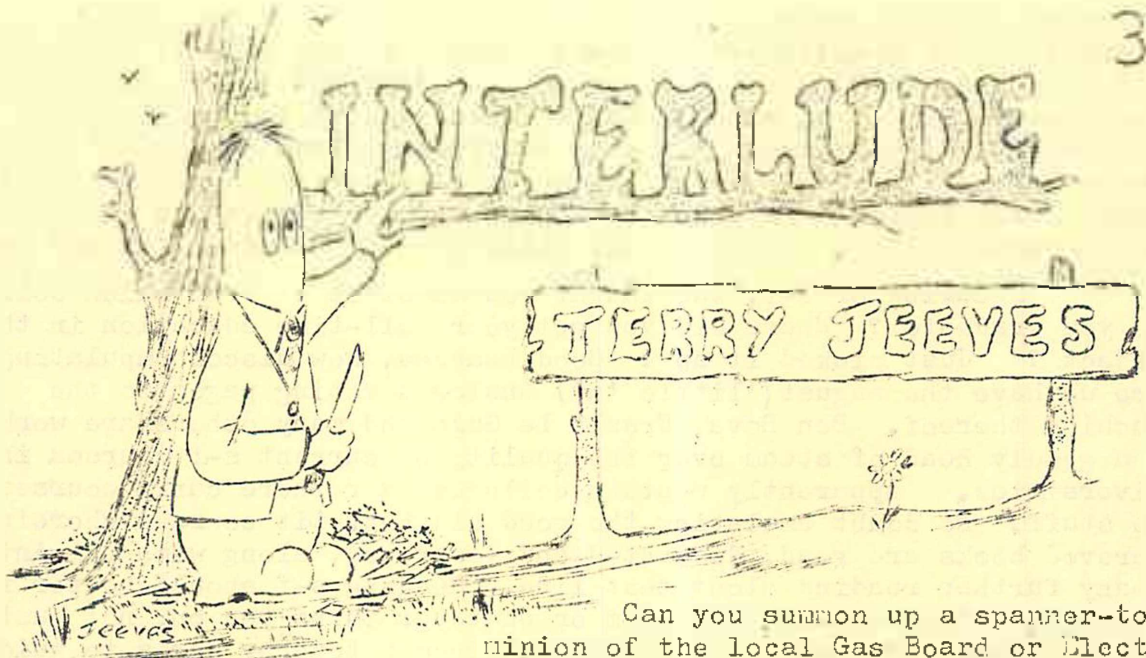
The BSFA, you think, has done its job...could be your right, but I would suggest that fandom can not be counted in mere bodies but in the number of ACTIVE members. (( My point, exactly...tho' perhaps made in a circumlutory way! )) Sturgeon's law could be adapted - 99% of all fans are not interested in what the other 1% are interested in. (( Don't think this is so, Keith. The very reason why people like you and I, and most of the older fan are still around fandom is because most of the fans do have similar tastes and interests as well as a common ground in a liking for sf. Not please, I said similar, not the same. )) The BSFA could hold them in a kind of "stasis" and, hopefully, a few will trickle into the active fandom that you and I are interested in. (( I like the idea of a 'stasis'. Yeah, let's rename it the BCSFA - The British Cryogenic SF Association - and use sleep-learning techniques on them. This would also keep them from crowding out the conventions... )) Meanwhile, I'm still half-convinced the BSFA needs to change tactics and encourage local groups - personal contact ( head to head, if your theory is correct ) is probably more likely to succeed than the odd fanzine dropping into the neo's lap... (( At the moment the newer fans seem to be doing quite nicely forming their own sf societies - the SFS, and Martin Easterbrook's London University Group, for instance - and it's my thought that if they have the usual fans overdeveloped bump of curiosity, they'll find out their own way into 'fandom' without any 'indoctrination'. ))

I think Terry misses one cogent point about the lack of response to artwork. Very few fanzines are sent to illiterate people - hence everybody knows he can write - so is competent to judge and criticise others ( that's open to criticism I know, but bear with me ). The great majority of fans, however, are only too aware that they can't draw and are therefore very wary of making any comment on the artwork ( other than the general "...and the artwork was lousy"/"good", which I suspect comes from a minority in any case ). We play safe, Terry, we like it ( or usually do ), but feel we can't make any valid comment.

Harrison (er..HARRISON..that's better) can't be kept down ( though I believe certain people are trying )...didn't really seem the same without von Neumann, tho'.







Can you summon up a spanner-toting minion of the local Gas Board or Electricity Authority (in less than a fortnight) without shelling out several quid before he even drops his scruffy tool-box on your best parquet? Daft question, of course you can't. Now try this one. How much does it cost you to have a special messenger hot-footing it up your drive with a Special Delivery letter? Answer, 40p (Unless of course, they've put it up again since I started this column) This is technically termed 'cost ineffectiveness' and can only be practised by monopoly holders. Another example of why your fanzine costs more these days is the 'Railway Letter', whereby 'certain railway companies' (What happened to B.R. ?) will put your letter on the first available train and if need be, 'transfer it between respective companies' (Again, where is B.R. ? What century is this ?) and finally deliver it to a Post Office for passing along to the addressee. Cost is 19p, or 25p to Northern Ireland. Makes you wonder how much money goes to maintaining the machinery of such a service and how much demand there may be for it. A glance through the inflation-packed pages of your Post Office Guide will show you many other examples of why the Post Office wants more letter revenue.

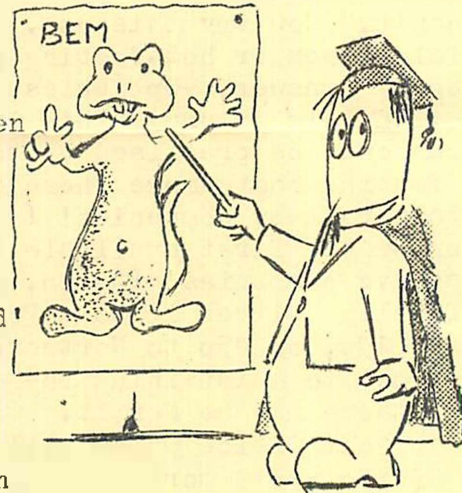
The Guide itself is an excellent example of pop goes the lolly. You get some 666 near to printed pages for 20p. I'd estimate it costs around £2 a copy to print. Within the hallowed pages is a little (pre-paid) postage card, send this off, and the Postal bods will proceed to send you all future supplements, six or eight of them, each of at least ten pages, all delivered to you in nice neat (expensive) envelopes.. and postage paid. I calculate that for every 20p you cough up, they go about 35 or 36 deeper in the hole on the deal...so of course, postal rates must go up....but did you notice that via going metric, the weight has gone down ! so you have a second, hidden, increase. Far be it from me to criticise a poor struggling service simply because it is inept, ineffectual and administered by idiots, but I can't help feeling how low postal rates might be...if these fringe services paid their way..or were dropped.



Moving on through mundania....how about a campaign (not a postal one) to suppress the ghastly term 'Sci-Fi' which all the with-it media boys will keep using. Stf. was bad enough, but 'Sci-Fi' ! The bind moggles. Such wordage grates as much as Eddie Waring's classic, 'His name is Gooeyseppy'. Then there's the case mentioned in the 'Guardian' which quotes a social worker. Referring to a 12-year-old with no less than 52 crime convictions..." he only has such a bad record because the police keep arresting him". Such is the blindness of the establishment hater.

Speaking of s-f, who taught you about it ? From which college did you graduate ? Where did you get your full-time education in the subject ? Just picked it up ? Good heavens, how discombombulating ! Here we have the august ('little 'a') Analog devoting pages to the teaching thereof. Ben Bova, Ursula Le Guin and many others are working up a goodly head of steam over the quality of current s-f courses in the Universities. Apparently umpteen colleges over there carry courses in the stuff. No doubt emulating the good old Eng. Lit courses wherein the approved books are read, dissected and destroyed, along with all interest in any further reading along that line. Reading s-f should be for fun, pleasure, entertainment, escapism or whatever turns you on, not just to let some moron pile up a few credits . Once a teacher dares to guide the analysis of a piece, the chances are far greater that he'll do it a mischief than achieve a conversion to the ranks of devotees. Heaven preserve us from the teachers of s-f.

As distinct from killing the stuff, various attempts have been made to bring it to life. The brain-children of many an s-f author has been quickly emasculated on the altar of the fast dollar. Most productions have been financially hamstrung from the start. To get the budget to run far enough, the s-f is often set in the 'real world' by choosing suitable stories. The TV version of s-f has been particularly prone to this cop-out. One way to go futuristic, and still avoid costly futuristic sets, is to set the scene in a spaceship, where, as in STAR TREK, you



can use an elaborate multi-part set for much of the action, dress up a few characters for aliens, and coat 'em in slimy mud for monsters. Robots of course are all humanoid, so can be played by any dead-pan actor suffering from rheumatism. Another favourite trick with S-T was to shoot the actors down to a planet, (or back in time) to a period of time such as the western era, the Chicago gangster, or whatever film set might be available from some other producer or series. Star Trek was a good attempt to bring s-f to the small screen, true. At this point, its apologists say, "Ah, but it only had a small budget !" Curious, armed with the 'Making of Star Trek' handbook, and a few other publicity quotes, I find that S-T had almost exactly the same budget as ITV's new block buster, 'SPACE 1999' Admittedly, the same aliens are there, and no doubt we shall eventually meet the standard monsters, but

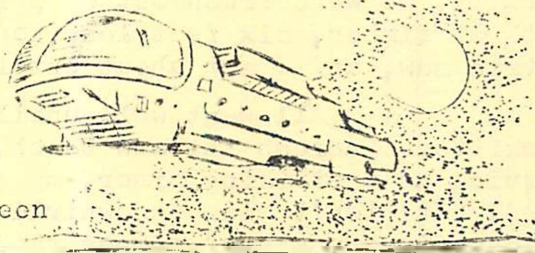


even so, the model work, process work, sets, use of front projection all take SPACE far beyond the Star Trek activity. Heck, the only space shots in Star Trek for many an episode, were the stock prints of the good old Enterprise zooming to or from the same planet. SPACE gives you more deep space action in one episode, than in all the S-T series put together. Critics will immediately holler that s-f isn't all space action...well, apart from the obvious that Star Trek concerned the travels of a spaceship, and the ITV show is even titled thataway, the fact remains that good, believable sets and action scenes go a long, long way to putting you in the right frame of mind to appreciate what the story is all about. I liked Star Trek, but you can put me down as a lover of SPACE 1999.

First (in date order) we had 1984, then Space 1999 and 2001. At long last, after two years in the making, I can be the first to announce the latest epic:-

3001 - Space Oddity.

Filmed in glorious, narrow-screen form, this is a full, ten-minute long animated saga of the Space Ship Gubbins which I have finally completed after shooting about three times as many feet of film as will finally appear on the screen. Then making the sound track took two recorders, several reels of tape, and much time...and still is nowhere near spot on, but for me, the job is done. Provided there is to be a Delta film competition at the Mancun next April, you'll be seeing it there... watch out for Captain Birk, Heinz 57 and literally thousands of stars. (How does anybody want to buy a couple of hundred feet of discarded animation film ?)



This seems to be the year of introspection in s-f (for purists, read 'Period' instead of 'year'. Dr. Frederick Wertham took a scholarly look at fandom, Brian Aldiss gave us 'Billion Year Spree', de Camp's S-F Handbook is to be re-issued, and I even managed to get (via Ken Slater (adv.) a copy of S-F Readers Guide. All of these, however pale into insignificance..for me at least..when I drool over three recently issued books in my collection. I'll list them here for the benefit of those of you with similar tastes who may have missed them. 100 Years Of S-F Illustration, by Frewin. The pb edition is 32.50 covers not only s-f, but also work from Doc Savage, Modern Mechanix and other fields...a historical text accompanies the artwork, and the whole shebang comes in topic chapters rather than strict chronological order. Then Thames and Hudson issued the Rottensteiner pb. The Science Fiction Book, also at 32.50. This again is profusely illustrated, so much so, that you can ignore the author's largely 'anti s-f' bias and enjoy the wide range of illustrations. However, if you want the best of the lot, I'd point you towards 2,000 A.D. by Jacques Sadoul which is sub-titled 'Illustrations from the Golden Age of S-F. A vanVogt introduction, a delightful, 'potted' history and then umpteen glorious pages of artwork. The price is 34.50, but one dip into the book, and I'm betting you'll raid the piggy-bank to get your copy.

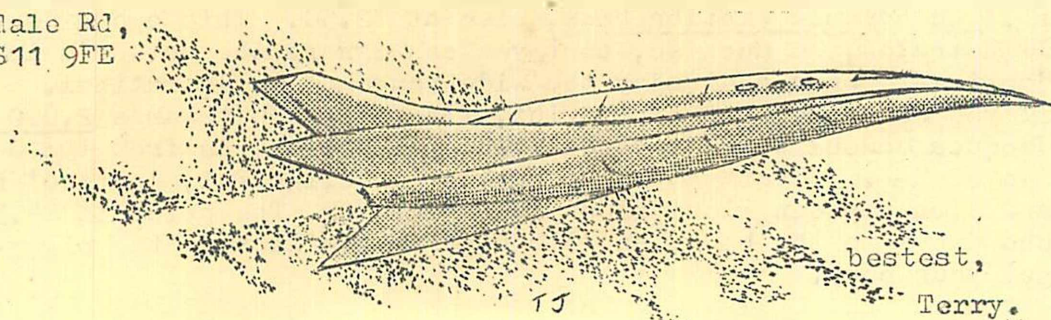
Had not Klono smiled upon me, this might have been typed by seven-fingered Jeeves. Outside our front door, stands Val's pride and joy, a tree-type growth yecept a Eucalyptus. This is normally an Australian plant which my daughter's science teacher assures her, will not grow in England. (She's a twit. Anyway, this plant has two types of leaves, the normal droopy kind, and a complete set of shish-kebab ones wherein the leaves are pierced centrally by the stem. All very clever, and something to do with genetics, RNA, DNQ and like that. However, A Eucalyptus fears two things...giant Pandas (which I gather, eat the darned things) and high winds. We don't have many Pandas, big or little, around Bannerdale Rd., but we have plenty of near tornadoes. So, Val asked me to stake her Eucalyptus. After a false start - when I thought she meant give it the anti-vampire treatment, I went to get a pole..... naturally, we were fresh out of poles. Undaunted, I located a hefty length of timber, six feet long, and measuring 5" by 4". Out came my electric saw, and I set about cutting the young tree down to pole size.

All went well until as the two halves fell apart, and as one skittered across the saw bench, my lightning-fast reflexes took over and quick as a striking miner, my left hand shot out to catch it...and missed. It didn't miss the whirling saw-blade however...and three of my precious fingers zipped across the teeth. Result, three gashed fingers and three sliced nails..which have still to re-grow back to normal. Still, I reckon I'm lucky, it might have been fannish, but I have no desire to become a seven-fingered alien.

On a happier, more s-f slanted note, I am pickled tink to have received from Phil Harbottle, a copy of his new anthology, "THE BEST OF E.E.SMITH". It contains excerpts, plus various tales, a listing of Doc's published stories, a preface by Phil, a foreword by Walter Gillings, and an essay by Smith himself on how he used to write his stories. It comes under the Orbit imprint, at 75p. You might argue over the choice of best (Why no 'Lensman' extract? ...surely this series is inarguably his best work?). Admittedly, the stories are sadly dated by to-day's standards, but when they first appeared, they were right up in the front line. So if you have an ounce of nostalgia left in you, this is another one for your memory-bank.

Finally, a WANTED plea. I'm trying to get hold of Volumes 1 and 2, of the Gollancs anthologies, THE SCIENCE FICTION HALL OF FAME, edited respectively by Robert Silverberg and Ben Bova. The stories selected by the Science Fiction Writer's of America. If you have either, or both...and wish to either sell them outright, or trade them for mint, newly published hardcovers at a good rate of trade, please drop me a line..the address is,

230 Bannerdale Rd,  
Sheffield S11 9FE



bestest,

Terry.